The Big Lie About the Sixties *Michael Harrington*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts—November 29, 1975, 50 cents

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from Washington ®
November 29, 1975

Crossroads

There's a vacancy on the Supreme Court. Where's the Holmes, Brandeis or Marshall to fill it? Will Mr. Ford find such a giant? We doubt it unless by accident, as Eisenhower found Earl Warren for chief justice, whom later he called his "biggest damnfool mistake." You never can tell how these appointees will turn out.

Richard Nixon knew precisely what kind of judge he wanted and left the nation four of them to whom Mr. Ford presumably now adds a fifth. Nixon told a television audience he wanted men who "share my conservative philosophy," "judicial conservatives," who supported his desire to defend the "peace forces." He ran against "permissive" judges who "coddled criminals" and he had the audacity to send up for confirmation two glaringly unqualified nominees with a record of insensitivity to racial justice.

With Justice Douglas' departure and with a new selection by Mr. Ford the prospect is that any Democratic liberal President elected in 1976 will face as conservative a court as Franklin Roosevelt faced in 1933. This is the more significant since the upcoming age after our current recession-inflation is apt to be an activist tumultuous age churning with change in religious, ethical and constitutional ideals. What will be the attitude of the holdover Nixon court?

Looking down implacably on the Roosevelt New Deal were vindictive conservatives Van Devanter, McReynolds, Sutherland and Pierce Butler; Brandeis, Stone and Cardozo on the liberal side; and Chief Justice Hughes and Owen Roberts holding the balance. They hurled legal thunderbolts at New Deal laws and in June 1936, for instance, declared the New York minimum wage act invalid 5 to 4. The Founding Fathers, you see, had fixed it so you couldn't guarantee working men or women a minimum wage constitutionally.

Could it happen again? Not quite like that but enough like it so that with Mr. Ford's new appointee to the Court, it's worthwhile knowing what the ancient struggle is all about. The job of the United States Supreme Court, unique on earth, is to guarantee change without revolution—the indispensable instrument to adapt the majestic generalities of the American Constitution to the emergent needs of the time and thereby to prevent it from becoming an irrelevant historical parchment. Sitting loftily there behind their immense mahogany bar in their Corinthian marble temple the nine robed justices seem like a judicial priesthood far removed from partisan politics, enunciating almost divinely inspired law. Nonsense.

They are intensely human beings: half of the 100 men who have so far served have not had previous judicial experience, 19 have been culled from cabinet or near-cabinet rank, two Secretaries of State (John Jay and John Marshall), a presidential aspirant or two (Hughes and Warren) and so on. Behind the judicial masks burn passionate convictions about politics and policy.

Mr. Ford's selection can be measured against the criterion enunciated by 65 law school deans and professors of law, history and political science three years ago who found 12 "great" justices. They included chronologically, Marshall, Story, Taney, Harlan, Holmes, Hughes, Brandeis, Stone, Cardozo, Black, Frankfurter and Warren. The found eight "failures," Van Devanter, McReynolds, Butler, along with Byrnes, Burton, Vinson, Minton and Whittaker.

What are the criteria for a successful judge? Previous judicial experience? Not at all, said Felix Frankfurter who wrote, "the correlation between prior judicial experience and fitness for the functions of the Supreme Court are zero." The need is breadth of view. Though it is called a court it is also a quasi-political body in the noblest sense. The biographies of the "great" and "near great" emphasize broad intelligence, and wide-ranging interests. They are informed beyond the narrow field of law; steeped in literature, history, political science, economics, the physical sciences, philosophy and religion. They have a love of learning and a capacity to assimilate and digest. They are men of resourcefulness and imagination. They must also have courage. The departing William O. Douglas had many of these attributes.

A central debate since the Court began is the degree of intervention or self-restraint it should use on the tough frontier issues. It is the ancient struggle between the individual and constituted authority—judicial activism and judicial restraint.

Last week a Senate Committee told how the FBI tried to destroy Martin Luther King in its counterintelligence (Cointel) program including sending a letter interpreted as a suggestion that he commit suicide. The FBI used 16 electronic bugs and eight wiretaps. King got the anonymous letter just 34 days before he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. The prize appears to have upset Hoover as much as Nobel prizes to Russians upset Moscow. (The biggest structure on Pennsylvania Avenue is still the J. Edgar Hoover Building.) What does the Supreme Court do in matters like this? Why, if cases growing out of such things reach it, it decides whether to intervene or not. Most cases are far more subtle. Firebrand James Otis denounced George III's writs of assistance used for harassing search and seizures of the colonists, and the Fourth Amendment today guarantees Americans the right of privacy: "to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures . . ." Or does it? Can evidence obtained illegally by bugging or wiretapping be used against a citizen before a grand jury? The Burger court this January in the *Calandra* case, ruled that it could, despite the Fourth Amendment; the so-called "exclusionary rule" (excluding tainted evidence) notwithstanding. The vote was 6 to 3, with the four Nixon judges, plus White and Potter Stewart, in the majority.

Dozens of such issues fill the field of criminal law alone. The Warren Court for 15 years decided them in favor of individual rights; the Burger Court generally comes down on the side of constituted authority. Opening a law center here Chief Justice Burger declared that Americans should not look to the courts to innovate and reshape their society—what he called "the alluring prospect that our world can be changed in the courts." The Burger Court is against "activism," presumably it would have kept hands off government snooping, left schools segregated, and ejected the one-person, one-vote rule.

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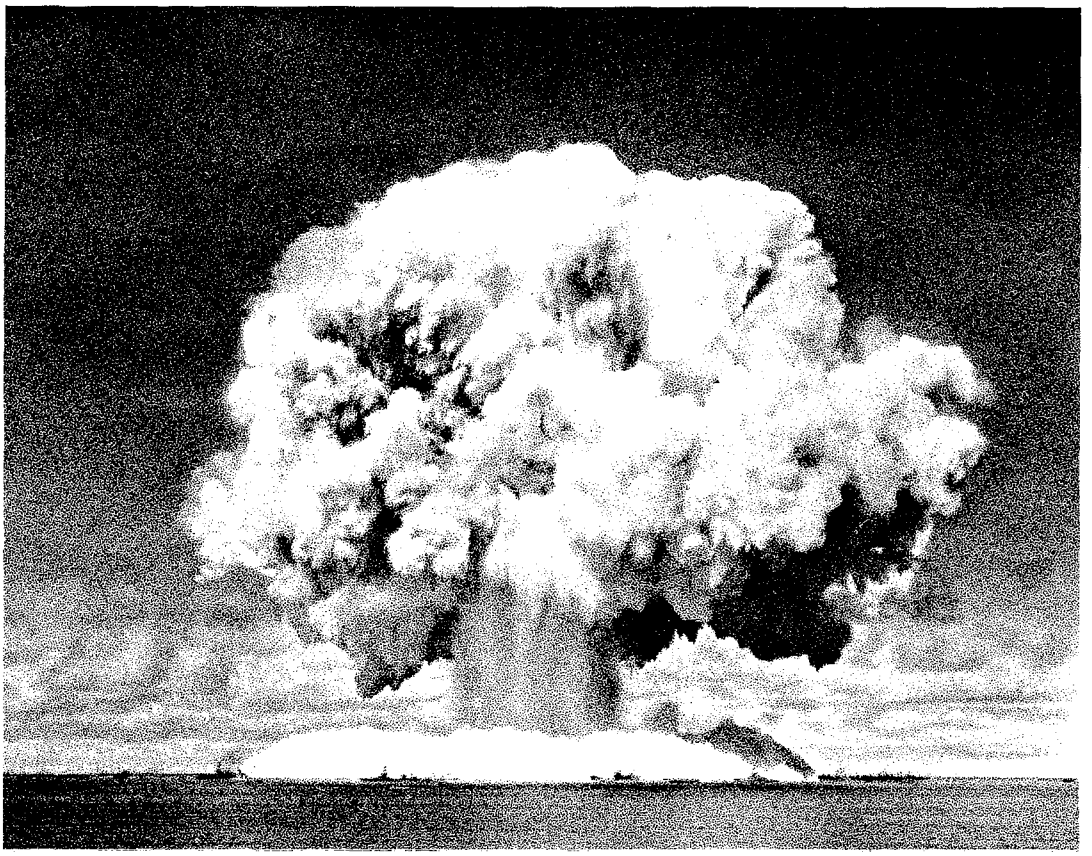

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Office Politics

Arnold Miller, the quiet West Virginian who heads one of the country's largest unions—the United Mine Workers of America—made an unusual decision this month. He called a national press conference to blast his enemies. It's hard to believe that such a man could have enemies. Miller is likable to the point of blandness; even his enemies say so. One of the men singled out in Miller's news conference as a troublemaker, district representative Frank Clements of Alabama, said recently that he had "nothing personal" against Miller. Clements said, "Arnold Miller and I are very close. It's just that when I go into that board meeting I've got to do business, and I can't let friendship get in the way." Business is business, and what's the difference if it's dirty? Clements, along with 13 others on the 21-member executive board voted on October 31 to call a special convention to remove Miller from office. Miller, provoked finally into responding to the bickering that's gone on for months, took the fight into the open. He replied on November 6 in his hometown, Charleston, West Virginia.

The day was summerlike, and riding down the hill from the airport to the motel where the conference was scheduled Miller's secretary-treasurer Harry Patrick wondered aloud whether the show could be held outside so that everyone could enjoy the sun. Patrick and a couple of Miller aides laughed. They joked about an executive board member who'd cast a vote against Miller and then, belatedly, realized he'd made a mistake. Now he was appealing to Miller to "go easy" on the rebels "for the sake of the union." Patrick and the aide decided they would call the worried man in the morning to say that his advice had been followed—they'd put aside the angry speech and used the soft one instead. It was a bitter joke, for they did nothing of the kind. Miller and Patrick called for the removal of every board member who voted to impeach the leadership and threatened to suspend the vice president, Mike Trbovich, who joined forces with the insurgent group.

Miller told a gathering of reporters, cameramen and friendly miners that "14 dictators on the executive board" were "tearing the United Mine Workers apart." He spoke in his rapid, deadpan style of people "who are so greedy for power and money that they're willing to bring this union down to get it." He mentioned that his enemies on the board had been elected on a promise of reform, had agreed to give up luxuries

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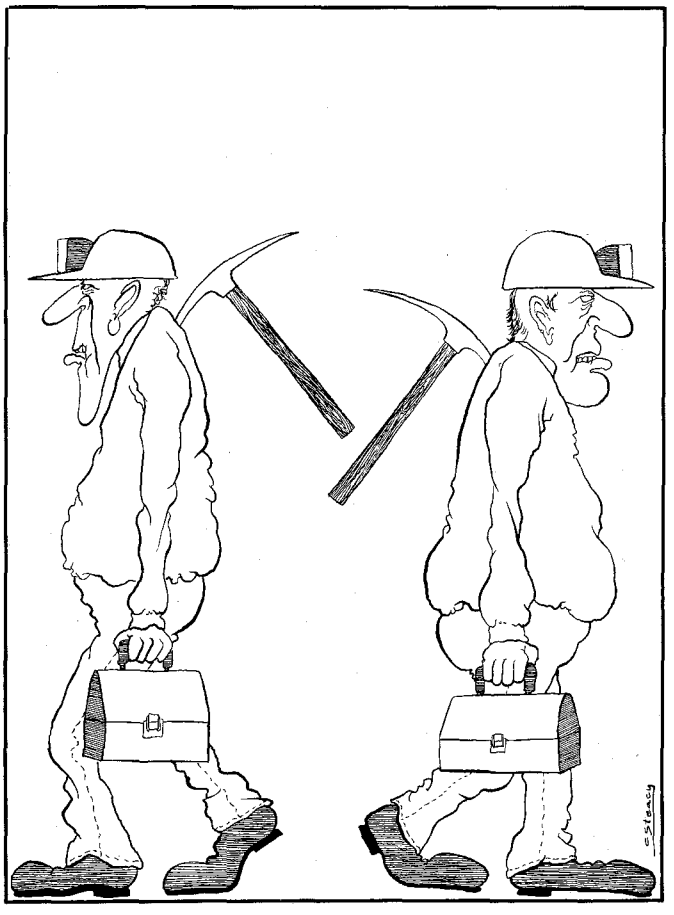
and now they were quietly feathering their nests again. The executive board, Miller said, awarded itself per diems of $10 this year (covering weekends too) in addition to giving itself a 10 percent pay raise. Miller finished and Patrick took over in more fiery fashion. He denounced the "liars" and "functional morons" who were attacking the president. Patrick ended with a warning: "In all my life I have never been so primed for a fight as I am now." He vowed to help remove from office every one of the board members who voted against Miller.

The other side of the story, as much as can be pieced together, is that Miller is behaving "undemocratically" in that he refuses to take orders from the executive board. Thus the fight appears to be a simple tug-of-war for control of the union, with Miller, Patrick and the staff pulling one way and vice president Trbovich and 14 board members pulling the other. The substantive issues are few. Trbovich and his friends complain about Miller's fiscal irresponsibility, but so far have not come forward with any specific examples. Trbovich also complains that he has been relieved of all authority, and that Miller's staff is pressuring him to lay low. He says he was asked to sign a sworn statement promising not to run for president of the union in 1977. Frank Clements, the Alabama delegate and one of the prime agitators, had his own list of gripes. He said Miller wasn't holding board meetings once a month as promised, that Miller wouldn't allow the board to "proofread" the union journal before sending it to the printers, that the staff wasn't being kept in line, and that a board decision to hold a convention in 1976 was not being carried out. Clements, on the one occasion that he did proofread the journal, noticed and deleted an article criticizing Alabama Gov. George Wallace.



The crux of the bickering is over control of the UMW staff. Clements said that "Miller's primary problem is that he's not making decisions himself; he's listening to people around him who don't seem to want anything but trouble all the time. They don't want harmony." Clements was chairman of a committee on personnel that looked at Miller's staff with a critical eye and apparently decided this fall that nine people should go. The report hasn't been released; it's due to come up at the next board meeting.

The staff is caught in the middle partly because it's an easy target and partly because conservatives on the board genuinely distrust it. Some of those voting against Miller were in power when Tony Boyle's machine ran the union, and ran it without interference. They must know that the longer Arnold Miller stays around the less chance there is that any of them will have the power they could have had under the old system. Miller's staff is seeing to that by educating the membership in the methods of self-rule. The staff is the abrasive instrument of change. The other embittering fact is that many of Miller's aides are young, well-educated, liberal Easterners—everything a union boss from the hills is not. They did not fight their way through union ranks to the top; they got in in an election. This stirs resentment among older officials, especially since Miller's reformers may disinherit an entire generation of officials who were plodding along under the old rules, expecting that one day they would get their reward. All this makes the fighting at UMW headquarters understandable, but not excusable. The UMW leaders who are unhappy with the way Arnold Miller is reshaping their union are entitled to get rid of him, but only if they can muster the rank and file votes. It is discouraging to see them try to take by stealth what they could not win in an open election.

Of Broken Hips And Garbage Men

It has now been about a month since Frank Rizzo, the first former policeman to serve as mayor of Philadelphia, was triumphantly reelected to a second term, trouncing his divided and unhappy opposition. The city has not yet slid into the Schuylkill River or succumbed to the more dire urban catastrophes, as his opponents had feared, but the mayor is undoubtedly waiting for the moment to begin his post-election purge of political adversaries in a manner that would, as he told

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Philadelphia magazine, "make Attila the Hun look like a faggot." That phrase sums up the sort of civic leadership the City of Brotherly Love has enjoyed for the past four years, and will endure for four more, and Rizzo now has the political power to do what he wishes, his slate of city council candidates having been swept into office with him.

The cyclical nature of politics has never been better illustrated than in Philadelphia. Described by Lincoln Steffens at the turn of the century as "corrupt and contented," it has had brief flirtations with reform movements over the years, most of them hapless as well as hopeless, and has sunk deeper into the good old ways in recent years.

A half century of Republican rule in City Hall was broken in 1951 by Joseph Clark of Harvard, followed by Richardson Dilworth of Yale. This was surely Philadelphia's Golden Age—a brief respite from the inanity and malevolence of municipal government. But Dilworth resigned in 1962 to run unsuccessfully for governor of Pennsylvania and was succeeded by the president of the city council, an amiable hack named James H. J. Tate. He was regarded as a calamity at the time, and rightly so, but Tate's occupation of the office was a far more natural state of affairs than the mayoralties of his patrician predecessors. (There will undoubtedly be a Tate Boulevard before there is a Clark Elementary School.)

Tate retired in 1971 and devoted his political energies to assuring the election of Rizzo, then police commissioner and holder of a deserved national reputation for pistol-packing exuberance on the job. It must now bother Tate to think of it; the elevation of Rizzo was scarcely a political master stroke. In office Rizzo lost no time separating himself from the Democratic organization that had created him, and has successfully established himself in the public mind as an independent operator.

Rizzo's tenure in City Hall has been colorful. But, as is so often the case, the quality of life in Philadelphia has changed little; perhaps it has even declined. Indeed Rizzo's claim for reelection was based on his having put the city in a "stable" condition. He has feuded with every significant Democrat in Pennsylvania. He threatened to run against Milton Shapp in 1974 if the governor didn't watch his step. He gave Richard Nixon a ringing endorsement for reelection a few minutes after the signing of the revenue sharing bill in 1972. He supported the Republican district attorney against his successful challenger in 1973. He maintained a 34-man special unit within the police department to spy on his favorite enemies. He is happily engaged in building a $400,000 house on his relatively modest salary. A special prosecutor has indicted, among others, the mayor's principal assistant . . .

In the nation, he is perhaps best known for his challenge two years ago to the city Democratic boss, Peter Camiel, to submit along with himself to a polygraph test on the matter of Camiel's allegations of a bribe offer by Rizzo partisans. Camiel passed, Rizzo failed, and one might have predicted that any opponent of the mayor could run successfully by circulating the famous photograph of Rizzo strapped to the electronic apparatus, a frown crossing his face, telling stories to the lie detector.

But that was not to be, certainly not after October 12 when Rizzo broke his hip while fleeing from danger at a refinery fire. For some time thereafter the Philadelphia press ran a series of nauseating pictures of the faithful visiting the Bambino in his hospital room, bearing his suffering with a courageous smile. He won by 76,000 votes, a significant increase from his surprisingly narrow margin of victory in 1971. The Republican candidate, a relatively liberal councilman, distinguished himself by running third behind the black candidate of something called the Philadelphia party.

For those with a sense of humor the election did provide at least one irresistible spectacle. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, which loudly describes itself a liberal "model of vitality and democracy" endorsed the mayor—in defiance of all its principles—after he granted a healthy preelection raise to the city's garbage men. That earned for AFSCME an honorable mention in the annals of political cynicism.

Philip Terzian

Mr. Terzian is an editor at The New Republic Book Company.

Vacancy on the Court

William O. Douglas

There was great poignancy in Justice William O. Douglas' departure from the Supreme Court. The hardy outdoorsman—who used to outlast hikers half a century younger than he during his annual marches along the C&O Canal—had been able, during recent public Court sessions, to get to his place of seniority on the chief justice's right only if wheeled there by several attendants. He often found it necessary to leave in the middle of lawyers' presentations—but not because of the impatience or the conflicting commitments that had regularly propelled him from his seat during his first 35 years on the Court. Now it was, as his letter of retirement disclosed, "incessant and demanding pain" that made him ask to be carried back to his chambers.

The human tragedy of Douglas' retirement produced a sympathetic letter from Gerald Ford, in laudatory terms the minority leader of the House of Representa-

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tives in 1970 would never have imagined being able to write. The captain of the "Impeach Justice Douglas" drive of five years ago praised Douglas' "distinguished years of service," his "contributions to the law," and his "firm devotion to the fundamental rights of individual freedom and privacy under the Constitution." The justice had held on as long as he physically could—probably to avoid giving President Ford the occasion to appoint his successor and thereby strengthen, even further, the Court's conservative wing. When he could continue no longer, he yielded up his retirement letter, and Mr. Ford buried it in bouquets.

It would be unfortunate if the fog of pity that now envelopes Justice Douglas' helpless physical condition obscures a realistic view of his accomplishments. False praise would be uncharacteristic of the man. There is much that Douglas and his often controversial legal career have taught to participants in this nation's legal process—to judges, lawyers, teachers and students. The qualities of sainthood were not, however, among his lessons. He was often superficial, impetuous, demagogic, sloppy and insensitive. If one believes what his adversaries have said—the newly published Felix Frankfurter diaries containing the latest revelations—he was also cunning and personally ambitious. But more important in public men than their private flaws are the qualities they bring to public business. Justice Douglas invested in his job enormous intelligence, independence and productivity. And he joined these virtues with universal curiosity, skepticism of government and passion for individual liberties.

Douglas believed that being a lawyer meant much more than mastering legal texts and applying analytic reasoning to the facts of cases. Joseph Story, a 19th-century Supreme Court justice who set an earlier longevity record on the Court, cautioned law students that the profession they were entering was "a jealous mistress," to be won over only by "a long and constant courtship" requiring "lavish homage." That was not Douglas' view. In the first volume of his autobiography, published last year, Douglas repeatedly expressed his disdain for lawyers who shut all else out of their lives to serve their calling. The prominent New York firm for which he slaved briefly after leaving school was a place where, even during dinner, "talk was always shop talk, never about running fast waters in a canoe or the problems of unrest in India or the 'red hunts' in New England." The firm's senior partner—although a highly competent attorney—had misspent his life because "he never had the time to get to know the flight of the whistling swan or the call of the loons across northern waters."

One need not share totally Justice Douglas' enthusiasm for raw nature (or, particularly, for the call of the loons—again remembered fondly in his farewell message to the other justices) to agree that lawyers' perspectives—particularly in this age of specialization—are much too narrow. Douglas demonstrated that it was not only possible, but desirable, to be at the peak of the profession and still remain interested, concerned and energetic in areas other than the law. Four days a week, he insisted, were enough to do the Court's business; the remainder he set aside for other things.

The breadth of Douglas' interests puzzled and annoyed lawyers. They could never anticipate what newspaper article, what book, what public event might catch his restless attention and appear, without warning, in the text of a decision or in a footnote or appendix. It was unfair, they claimed, to have Supreme Court decisions depend on statements not made part of a record and subjected to the adversary contentions of lawyers. But it was consistent with Douglas' philosophy of life and law to poke through the tidy formalities established by the legal brotherhood. Each breach was, one suspects, a deliberate reminder by the justice that life is more unruly and cluttered than lawyers would like it to appear, and that decisions which significantly affect society could not be confined by what lawyers thought relevant to their particular case.

It is popular to pair Justice Douglas with the late Justice Hugo Black. Their early civil libertarian dissenting views—which ultimately became the majority opinions of the Warren Court—are compared to the dissents of Holmes and Brandeis (to whose seat Douglas succeeded), which also gained acceptance in later years. It is more difficult, however, to extract an integrated judicial philosophy from the opinions of Justice Douglas than from those of Justice Black—just as it is harder to capsulize Holmes' thinking than Brandeis'. While Black's results in constitutional cases had to fit into the comprehensive constitutional theories he propagated on every available occasion, Douglas' votes were seldom limited by broad general postulates. It is remarkable, with hindsight, how often the results he reached seem right. The most consistent single principle that emerges from his constitutional rulings relates more to the role of the courts than to any particular provision of the Constitution. It was Douglas' belief, expounded in his votes and opinions, that the main job of the courts was to restrain other branches of government in their dealings with individuals. Each case in which the Supreme Court failed to correct an individual injustice or to redress a valid grievance was, by these lights, an abdication of major responsibility.

Although his legal career had its academic interludes (including his almost becoming dean of the Yale Law School), Justice Douglas chose not to be an overt teacher and proselytizer on the Supreme Court. He expressed his views in written opinions, which occasionally succeeded in stirring his colleagues to action. More than any other member of the Court, he would note his dissents when the Court refused to hear cases; more frequently than is generally known, a sharp

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written statement by him objecting to the refusal to hear a case would turn around enough votes to win review.

The concept of judicial independence was suited to Justice Douglas' temperament, and all his work on the Court was characterized by it. In an opinion dealing with the power of a panel of judges to deny a lower federal judge authority to hear and decide cases, he noted the existence of a judicial philosophy that would "make all federal judges walk in some uniform step." Never in the days when Justice Douglas walked, ran and climbed, did he do so by steps other than those that were uniquely his.

Nathan Lewin

White House Watch

Small Expectations

Paris

A lot of pressure from France and West Germany, a lot of bargaining with their governments and a lot of argument in Washington preceded President Ford's reluctant decision to join French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and the heads of the British, West German, Italian and Japanese governments in a conference called and organized by Giscard d'Estaing "to discuss economic issues of mutual interest" at the Château de Rambouillet, a massive, ancient and ugly edifice set among lovely lakes, grasslands and forests some 30 miles southwest of Paris. After one full day, parts of two other days and two evenings with his peers and their foreign and finance ministers at the chateau, President Ford said in a formal statement that it had been "a highly successful meeting in all respects." A change in the text that had been prepared for him indicated that the economic summit had been less than successful in one rather esoteric but important respect. The prepared text had him saying that he and the other leaders had emerged from the conference with a "conviction that we can master our futures." The President actually spoke at the closing ceremony of "our conviction that *our peoples* can master their futures." One of the arguments that persuaded him to attend the conference had been that if it went well it could bolster the confidence of the people of the six countries in their governments and, more to the point, strengthen the confidence of the leaders themselves in their capacity to define and resolve the enormous economic problems that afflict their countries and the world. It was interesting that amid the general euphoria at the close of the conference the President chose not to claim that the latter effect had been achieved.

For many months the President and his chief advisers doubted that anything worthwhile could be achieved at such a conference. Giscard d'Estaing originally asked the governments of the US and of what he regarded as the only four other industrial democracies that really mattered to join France in a meeting devoted solely to international monetary policies. He made it clear publicly and privately that his purpose would be to persuade the US and other governments to abandon the system of floated currencies that the US more or less forced upon the Western economic community in 1971 and return to a system in which the exchange rates of the principal currencies would be fixed by government decision rather than left to the play of the world money markets. Administration doctrine, Mr. Ford's personal doctrine, Republican doctrine and the doctrine of the Federal Reserve Board and its chairman, Arthur Burns, forbade US agreement to the change demanded by Giscard d'Estaing. Mr. Ford, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Secretary of the Treasury William Simon therefore agreed among themselves that it would be foolish for the US to attend such a conference and put itself in the predictable and unpleasant position of opposing and frustrating the will of other governments. When the President and Secretary Kissinger stopped in Bonn on their way to the Helsinki conference last July, German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt argued strongly for a general economic conference to be attended by the chiefs of state or government of the principal non-Communist industrial powers. Schmidt nominally supported Giscard d'Estaing's proposal for a monetary conference, but it was clear to Messrs. Ford and Kissinger that his actual purpose was as unpalatable to them as Giscard d'Estaing's was. The chancellor's overriding purpose was to use the conference as a means of bringing international pressure upon the Ford administration to go much further than it was willing to go in stimulating the US economy with enlarged budget deficits and expansion of the money supply. All of the prospective participants except the US wanted this because of the enormous importance to them of the US market for their exports. Chancellor Schmidt, faced with a worsening economic situation in Germany, wanted it more intensely than the others because German industry depends to a greater extent than the others upon its exports to the US. Here again, the President and Kissinger resisted rather than submit themselves to international pressures to take a course that they were determined not to take. At private meetings between sessions of the Helsinki conference, Giscard d'Estaing and Schmidt renewed their urgings. Prime Minister Harold Wilson of Great Britain supported them to some extent, though more from prideful desire that Britain be represented at the proposed conference than from a real and burning wish for it.

Developments led President Ford and Kissinger to agree to a conference from which neither of them expected much. President Giscard d'Estaing indicated

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privately that he was prepared to back away from his demand for totally and rigidly fixed exchange rates and settle for an understanding that at forthcoming meetings of the International Monetary Fund the conferees would advocate a modified float of the principal currencies, with value in terms of the dollar and the dollar's value in relation to other currencies allowed to fluctuate within narrow and agreed limits. Mr. Ford, Kissinger and the President's chief economic advisers concluded that the US could go that far toward Giscard d'Estaing's objective without abandoning the basic principle that market forces rather than government fiat should determine the rates. The other development was that key domestic indicators showed enough improvement in the US economy and enough progress toward recovery from the recession to enable the President to argue that no further stimulus was needed and indeed that the kind and degree of added stimulus wanted by Schmidt might defeat its purpose by reviving the waning inflation. Some recent changes in the indicators, among them rises in the wholesale price index and the rate of unemployment made the counter-argument harder to sustain than it had seemed to be when the President decided to go along with a broadened economic summit, but he was stuck with it at Rambouillet and stoutly insisted that the adverse indicators did not mean that the US recovery was either slowing or illusory.

Mr. Ford decided to accept Giscard d'Estaing's invitation only after exposure to some fierce debate within and at the top of his administration. The debate in the main was between advisers and assistants whose principal concern was the President's political prospect of nomination and election in 1976 and those who were chiefly concerned with foreign policy and international relationships in general. The politicians opposed his going to the conference and the policy advisers favored his going. The opponents argued that there simply were no problem areas that could produce hard decisions and impressive declarations and that the President would be thought to be grandstanding, wasting time and effort that ought to be devoted to business at home. The chief arguments for going to the conference were that even though no major decisions and announcements could be expected the exercise would be worthwhile if the leaders and their ministers recognized the fact and analyzed the nature of "interdependence" in a time of worldwide economic distress. Publicized recognition by the US President that his country's economic condition and economic policies gravely affected the economies of other major "industrial democracies" and that their governments therefore had a legitimate interest and stake in the American government's economic decisions would be useful in itself. At the least it would assuage their resentment at what appeared to them to be arrogant exclusion from policy determinations that vitally affected them. In domestic terms it would provide the President with support for his efforts to discourage and defeat the more extreme American protectionists who were making increasing trouble for him.

COMING: Playing monopoly—
a report by Eliot Marshall
on the split personality
of *The Washington Post*

After the President agreed with advocates of the conference, small working groups representing the six participating governments met in New York and finally in London to set an agenda and to determine in advance the issues on which defensible degrees of agreement or at least agreement not to disagree in public could be expected. Instead of putting a senior official from the State or Treasury Departments at the head of the American group Mr. Ford reached outside of government for former Labor and Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz. Only the media's profound lack of interest in the subject and George Shultz's reputation for complete integrity saved him and the President from an embarrassing row over what could have been made to seem a serious conflict of interest. Shultz is president of the Bechtel Corporation, a conglomerate with multinational construction and other interests that inevitably would be affected by international economic discussions. Although no effort was made to keep his role and the group's work secret, the preparations and Shultz's part in them were seldom reported.

In a speech in Pittsburgh on November 11, four days before the conference opened, Henry Kissinger undertook to define the American interest in the meeting, the positions the President would take and the objectives he would try to get agreement on. An interesting passage in the speech stopped short of acknowledging the feeling that the most useful thing the conference could accomplish would be to restore the leader's confidence in themselves and in their capacity to deal with their grievous problems. Kissinger came pretty close to it, however, when he cited the unemployment, inflation, losses of production, and arbitrary increases in oil prices that plague the Western industrial world, and concluded "the deepest consequence is not economic, but the erosion of people's confidence in their society's future and a resulting loss of faith in democratic means [and] in governmental institutions and leaders." At the start of what soon would become a flood of conference rhetoric to the effect that the Western industrial world is in one hell of a shape and will be in worse shape unless something effective is done about it, Kissinger also set forth specific American aims at the conference. They

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provide the best available measure of what, from the US standpoint, the conference did and did not accomplish. Kissinger said the President would propose that ministers "responsible for economic policy meet periodically to follow up on policy directions set at the summit." He said the US would ask the conferees to pledge their governments to complete pending renegotiation of international trade terms along free trade lines by 1977. He said the President would "propose that we reaffirm our common determination to avoid new barriers to trade as well as actions which provoke countries to erect them." And: "The United States will urge the summit to recommit the industrial democracies to an even more forceful pursuit of the fundamental long-term goal of depriving the oil cartel of the power to set the oil price unilaterally." Finally the President would argue that under any revised international monetary system "Each country should be free to choose the exchange rate regime that best suits it, provided it respects international obligations to avoid trade and capital restrictions and competitive devaluations."

The grandiloquent "Declaration of Rambouillet" that followed the conference was mostly a rhetorical assertion of agreement upon goals rather than upon measures to accomplish the goals. Even so, it provided some indications of how far the US got with its specific proposals. The conferees agreed to support completion of international renegotiation of trade terms by 1977. They deplored protectionist measures by which countries "try to solve their problems at the expense of others" and simultaneously accepted Prime Minister Wilson's notice to the other five governments that Britain soon will impose import quotas in order to protect industries that cannot compete in their home markets. President Ford and his delegation, confronting strong pressures to take equivalent protective measures, were in no position to object very strenuously to the British course. Far from committing themselves to a joint attack upon the arbitrary pricing powers of the OPEC oil cartel, the other five conferees forced the US to settle for the feeble advocacy of a harmonious and steady development in the world energy market. The announced agreement upon a controlled currency float rather than the fixed rates first advocated by France and the totally free float preferred by the US is subject to IMF approval and in any case was concluded before the Rambouillet conference opened. The other conferees merely affirmed what the US and France had already agreed upon. The majority rejected the Kissinger-Ford proposal that the conference be institutionalized and made a permanent instrument of cooperation by having the member governments' economic ministers meet periodically to review the steps recommended at Rambouillet and to consider what other measures should be adopted to forward recovery in the sick industrial world. It all added up to a poor score for the US but the outcome was no worse and perhaps a bit better than the President expected.

John Osborne

Defeats and Pyrrhic Victories

The UN Against Itself

by Anthony Astrachan

The 30th UN General Assembly reached its climax November 10 by adopting a resolution in which it "Determines that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination." This is a lie, as US Ambassador Daniel Moynihan declared in a speech that departed from the normal niceties of United Nations discourse, an "infamous act" by which "the abomination of anti-Semitism has been given the appearance of international sanction." Moynihan's judgment, applauded by an unusually broad segment of the American public, was a moral one. On the practical level of politics and diplomacy, the Jews of the world and the state of Israel will survive, as Israeli Ambassador Chaim Herzog predicted in the Assembly debate.

Indeed the actual votes on the resolution gave Israel more diplomatic support and the West more unity, even while losing, than they have enjoyed here for years. More likely to be hurt are the United Nations and the countries that voted for the resolution—the first of

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several paradoxes produced by the Zionism episode. The second was that passage of the resolution embodied the worst kind of UN conflict—in a year that otherwise has seen a revival of cooperation and an attempt to avoid confrontation. The third is that Moynihan's style of confrontation, which appeals to so many Americans and seems to offer new vigor to the Western position, may actually have lost the West votes on the issue.

The UN has already been hurt by the Assembly's compulsion to demonstrate once again its irrelevance to serious international business like making peace in the Middle East. It will be hurt further as Western states ignore the UN's projected "decade against discrimination," aimed primarily at South Africa, with which the Zionism resolution was packaged. And the US Congress may cut the appropriations necessary for the UN's survival—though the first week of congressional reactions makes that seem improbable. The countries that voted for the resolution will be hurt on one level because they have reduced the already limited uses of an imperfect diplomatic tool that is more valuable to them than to the great powers—the General Assembly. They may be hurt on deeper levels if the United States and Europe take economic measures to punish them. But as Henry Kissinger said after reminding them that such votes will have an impact on bilateral relationships, "We also will keep in mind that we have long-term obligations and that we will not be driven by the emotions of the day."

Kissinger was acknowledging the paradox that the Zionism vote took place in a year when economic need had led the nations of the world to renew the delicate process of international cooperation after the flow of confrontations of 1974. The poorer countries, known in different constellations as the developing countries, the Third World, and (without much justification) the non-aligned group, want desperately to reconstruct the world economic order. They feel the present system prevents them from developing as they want by subjecting their trade and natural resources to control by the rich countries. They resent the fact that countries with 70 percent of the world's population have only 30 percent of the world's income. Last year their resentment produced a special session of the Assembly on the world economy that proved sterile, and a regular session in which determination to insult the rich produced an equally sterile set of unenforceable actions on the Middle East, southern Africa and other problems. This year, they decided to try to reestablish a dialogue—and the developed countries met them half way, until the Zionism resolution broke the pattern.

The effort to avoid confrontation began with Third World decisions not to seek the expulsion of Israel from the UN. In March the coordinating bureau of the conference of nonaligned countries discussed expulsion as a possibility. In July the foreign ministers of 40 Islamic countries demanded expulsion. The US made plain that it would withdraw its presence and its money from the UN if Israel were expelled. At the same time the poor poor, or resourceless, countries began to voice resentment of their domination by the rich poor; the Arab oil producers have given almost no money to compensate the poor poor for damage done by the oil price rises. The result: at the end of July, an Organization of African Unity summit meeting in Kampala rejected a resolution urging suspension until Israel withdrew from occupied Arab lands. The OAU did adopt a resolution saying that the "racist regime in occupied Palestine" had a common imperialist origin with the racist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa, which was cited as one of the precedents for the Assembly resolution on Zionism, but at the time that seemed like a routine, ignorable condemnation of Israel. The conference of nonaligned nations at Lima in August also rejected a call for the expulsion of Israel. It did call for new pressures on Israel in terms that were cited in the Zionism resolution, but significantly chose words that were more moderate than those of the 1974 Assembly resolutions on Palestine.

The second major effort at avoiding confrontation was a special session of the Assembly on economic matters, which preceded the regular session in September. "The United States in effect rejoined UN economic discussions after 10 years' absence," as a diplomat from another Western country put it. Moynihan read an hour-and-45-minute speech for Kissinger on the opening day that suggested that the United States was offering serious proposals to deal with serious Third World complaints—among them the creation of an international financing agency that would lend poor countries $2.5 billion a year to sustain development programs when demand for their commodity exports fluctuates. Third World delegates reacted with surprised pleasure and moderated much of their own rhetoric. Some of them stopped talking about principles (which often meant demanding a Western confession of guilt for the plight of the poor), picked up Western hints and concentrated on specific problems and proposals. Diplomats and journalists spoke of a "real dialogue" that contrasted with last year's fruitless exchange of polemics.

Underlying this dialogue was sharper discussion between the moderates and the hard-liners among the non-aligned. The hard-liners, led by Algeria, Iran and Mexico, lost on most issues to the moderates, among whom were such non-clients of the West as Tanzania and Yugoslavia. The hard-liners' pressure stiffened the Western position, however, keeping the session going two days beyond schedule and forcing a meeting to run past 3 am in order to achieve the resolution adopted unanimously eight hours later—the same day the regular session began.

The resolution dealt with measures in international

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trade, the transfer of resources and international monetary reform, science and technology, industrialization, food and agriculture, cooperation among developing countries, and restructuring the economic and social sectors of the UN system. Some of the measures were Kissinger's proposals; others did not evoke Western enthusiasm, like buffer stocks of commodities financed by the rich and indexing of raw materials prices to the (inflating) prices of manufactured goods. There was no doubt at the end that confrontation had been avoided, but Western and Third World diplomats agreed that if the rich countries do not follow through on their promises, explicit or implied, the moderates among the nonaligned will feel badly burned and confrontation will be resumed between the poor and the rich with an intensity that will bode ill for world peace. Some Third World moderates voiced fears that Kissinger and Moynihan had intended to put one over on them and had succeeded, even as they expressed pleasure at the suspension of confrontation.

Three other, lesser decisions might serve as symbols that the regular session, like the special session, was pursuing cooperation and dialogue rather than confrontation. The clearest was the adoption of a political resolution on Southern Rhodesia that Britain was able to support for the first time in years. The silliest was the political committee's adoption of two contradictory resolutions on Korea, one with 59 votes and the other with 51 out of 142 members. It was ridiculous even to the Assembly's most ardent supporters, but at least it left both sides looking equally ridiculous rather than making one a clear winner and the other a clear loser.

The most dubious of the three symbols was the August decision of the 24-member Decolonization Committee to postpone until next year (meaning indefinitely) a Cuban resolution affirming "the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence." The vote to defer could have been Third World consideration for US feelings or a realistic concession to US arm-twisting, which was no secret. But Moynihan escalated the level of confrontation by acknowledging on network television that the United States had warned committee members that it would consider a vote for the resolution "an unfriendly act," and boasted that the tactic had worked. "We are not about to be lectured by police states on the processes of electoral democracy," the ambassador said on "Meet the Press." "They are talking about our internal affairs . . . They are threatening to start an insurrection in this country. That we regard as an unfriendly act and we told them so and for the first time we beat them—and a good thing, too, we think."

This was the language of confrontation. It may or may not have been appropriate for the Puerto Rican question; it certainly was for Moynihan's speech after the Zionism vote. But many diplomats, including some Americans, wonder if Moynihan's style of confrontation always pays off at the United Nations; they raise questions in particular about the diplomacy leading up to the Zionism vote.

Of course, Moynihan did not create the confrontation on Zionism. The tiny African nation of Burundi, whose government committed genocide against its own Hutu people introduced a resolution vaguely linking Zionism and racism that the Assembly adopted in 1973; the United States opposed it routinely. This year, the idea had a double appeal. To the Arabs it was a substitute for the expulsion of Israel, which they had had to abandon for the time being, but they had not agreed on the terms of a resolution, the right parliamentary tactics or the results they would settle for. To some nations it was a good way to turn the Assembly away from cooperation and return it to its alternative function as an arena for conflict. The Palestine Liberation Organization wanted to do both—to revive the spirit of confrontation that gave Yassir Arafat the honors of a head of state last year, and to show the intensity of their determination to attack Israel with words as well as arms no matter what the consequences. (One consequence they surely desired would be the embarrassment of the peacemaking efforts of Kissinger and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.)

The PLO, which is only an observer here, found five nations to preempt the more hesitant Arabs and precipitate events. This surprised the US, other Western countries, and many nonaligned moderates who now feel they should have been prepared for what appeared but were not. The five sponsored amendments to one of the resolutions on the decade for action to combat racism and racial discrimination, amendments that labeled Zionism an evil akin to South African apartheid. The sponsors were Cuba, whose ambassador admits that he seeks confrontations on "progressive" causes; Democratic Yeman, Libya and Syria, three of the hardest-line Arab states; and Somalia.

The amendments were introduced in the Assembly's third committee, the ironically named social, humanitarian and cultural committee, on October 1. That was the day Idi Amin appeared in the House of Peace in his field marshal's uniform, called for "the extinction of Israel as a state," and appealed to Americans to "rid their society of the Zionists." He made those remarks as president of Uganda. They contrasted with what he said as president of the OAU. But Moynihan, speaking to the AFL-CIO in San Francisco two days later, did not merely denounce Amin as a "racist murderer," a fair if undiplomatic description. He said that it was no accident that a racist murderer was head of the OAU, which hardly squared with his acknowledgement a moment later that the OAU meeting in Kampala had broken "the gathering force of the movement to

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suspend Israel" from the Assembly. He also suggested that Israel's antagonists were all despotisms seeking to destroy Israel because it was a democracy. Moynihan's comments caused an uproar even among Africans who had been embarrassed by Amin.

Perhaps he came on so strong because he expected the third committee to vote on the Zionism resolution that day or the next. But the Italian ambassador, Piero Vinci, speaking the same day for the nine European Common Market members with no knowledge of what Moynihan would say in San Francisco, warned that the Nine would not support the decade against discrimination if the Zionism resolution were part of it. The Europeans and Ghana (anxious to secure maximum attendance at a world conference it would play host to at the height of the decade) succeeded in putting off the vote for two weeks. Negotiations produced a new version, a separate resolution with no explicit link of Zionism to the decade against discrimination although it was one of five resolutions in the committee report on the decade. This was the resolution ultimately adopted. It had 26 sponsors, all but six of them Arab. The changes were hardly enough to satisfy the West, and confrontation was assured. On October 17, a motion to defer the resolution until next year failed, 68 against, 45 for and 16 abstentions. The committee then adopted the resolution, 70 to 29, with 32 abstentions.

Moynihan then embarked on a series of pronouncements, calling the resolution "obscene," saying that only the countries that had voted against it were "decent," charging (in the traditional guise of "a high official") that Chile had sold its vote in exchange for Arab support on a resolution charging Chile with violating human rights, and otherwise taking a hard line. (Chile changed its vote from "Yes" to abstention in the plenary.) President Ford and Kissinger echoed him in measurably milder terms. The combination of Moynihan's San Francisco speech and his post-committee comments cost the West between three and 10 votes on the Zionism resolution, according to African and European diplomats and at least one American. The delegate of Mauritius, in his speech in the plenary, objected to the charge of "obscenity" and complained of American pressures to change his position. He resisted the pressure by voting as he had in committee, against the proposal to defer the resolution until next year and abstaining on the resolution itself. Even so, other observers are skeptical that Moynihan's remarks had such direct and simple consequences, and point out that 10 votes might not have been enough to ensure postponement of the Zionist resolution—the only form of victory the West could achieve on the issue. (A 10-vote swing from "no" to "yes" would have changed the result, but 10 votes from "no" to "abstain" or from "abstain" to "yes" would not have.) But it is noteworthy that Kissinger, whose contempt for the United Nations is huge, said again last week that he would have used "more restrained" language on Amin than Moynihan did and that he specifically would not have linked any criticism to the OAU.

While Moynihan was speaking in such sharp terms, the United States was doing very little arm-twisting in the world's capitals. American officials claim this was deliberate, that better results were expected from leaving the lobbying to the Nine and the Scandinavians, who felt very strongly on the issue and had more leverage in Asia and Africa. It is also true, however, that Washington ordered its embassies abroad to make major efforts to affect votes on the Korean question, a matter of vast unimportance outside the Korean peninsula, and asked for no serious representations about Zionism until after the vote on Korea October 29—far too late for maximum effect on the Zionism vote 12 days later. The discrepancy between the high level of US rhetoric and the low level of action on Zionism, especially when contrasted with the heavy action on Korea, may have persuaded some countries that the United States was not serious in trying to reverse the committee vote. The European lobbying on Zionism was vigorous, but started only after the committee vote—not soon enough to overtake all the Arab diplomatic efforts, lubricated in many cases by Libyan oil money.

Despite these diplomatic shortcomings, the Western lobbying produced some good results. The vote in the plenary on the motion to defer the question until next year lost, 55 to 67 with 15 abstentions. The West picked up 10 votes and the Arabs only one from the time of the committee vote. That was the important question so far as the West was concerned. On the resolution itself, which received the most media attention but was less important in terms of UN parliamentary tactics, the tally was 72-35 with 32 abstentions. In both cases, the vote against Israel was 30 to 40 below the usual automatic majority. The absence or abstention of non-aligned leaders like Peru and Zambia was a major Western victory. Romania, the only Warsaw Pact country with diplomatic relations with Israel, was absent—which was intended to show that the "whole matter was not even worth discussing," a remaining source said privately. Japan, Mexico, Portugal and Spain all voted in favor of deferral, showing their basic loyalties to the West on the key test. Then they hedged their bets—Mexico and Portugal by voting in favor of the resolution itself, Japan by abstaining and Spain by being absent. Mexico's President Luis Echeverria hopes to succeed Kurt Waldheim as UN secretary general with Third World support. Portugal was presumably showing the left wing and non-aligned sympathies of her revolutionary government. Spain was caught between her loyalties to the West and her desire for good relations with the Arabs, already complicated by her settlement with Morocco and Mauritania over the future of the Spanish Sahara—a settlement opposed by Algeria. Japan was showing her fear over being at the

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mercy of Arab oil producers.

The speeches that day set an unusually high standard for UN oratory, which is usually a pudding of propaganda studded with candied trivia. Ambassador Herzog of Israel started by reminding the delegates that they were voting, fittingly, on the 37th anniversary of the *Kristalnacht*, the night the Nazis smashed the windows of all the Jewish stores in Germany and burned the synagogues to blaze the trail that led inexorably to Auschwitz. He discussed the Biblical meaning of Zion and the modern meaning of Zionism, the racism of Arab states, the function of the Jews as a testing agent of human decency, and finished with a flourish, saying that Israel would treat the resolution as no more than the piece of paper it was, tearing the text in his hands as he did so. Ambassador Abdallah al-Sayegh of Kuwait gave a scholarly rather than a vulgar statement of the Arab case. Ambassador Moynihan called a lie a lie, a rare occurrence at the United Nations, and discarded the usual diplomatic pretense of happy acceptance of an adverse vote: the United States, he said, "does not acknowledge, it will not abide by, it will never acquiesce in this infamous act." Even some Westerners who felt his rhetoric of confrontation had been unwise before the vote welcomed the catharsis of his speech afterward.

The Big Lie About the Sixties

by Michael Harrington

The militant negativism of the Ford administration and the weary disenchantment of some prominent liberals rest in considerable part upon one of the most influential myths of the '70s: that government cannot solve social problems by "throwing money" at them. This proposition, in turn, is supposed to be a generalization out of the experience of the '60s when, it is said, Washington spent and experimented prodigally, and in the process did more harm than good.

If this thesis were simply an article of faith for sectarian, free-market ideologues like Ford and Secretary of the Treasury William Simon, it would not be particularly alarming. Such people believed in it long before the New Frontier and the Great Society; for them what happened in the '60s was just one more example of a timeless truth. But when liberal governors like Jerry Brown in California and Michael Dukakis in Massachusetts start to popularize this very same theme, that is a more serious matter.

If, as one devoutly wishes, a liberal Democrat wins the presidency in 1976, he will be in the difficult position of having to lead a nation wracked with cycles of recession and inflation worse than any encountered in a generation. Under those circumstances, if the Democratic party and its President fall back upon the wisdom of Herbert Hoover and wait for the nation's troubles to work themselves out, on the grounds that government can do nothing, they will rightly be repudiated by the people. The party that since Roosevelt has claimed to be the agent of progressive change will have failed utterly.

In saying this, I do not want to suggest for a moment that all that is necessary is to go back to Roosevelt's principles (or Kennedy's, or Johnson's) rather than to Hoover's. There is a certain truth to the charge that liberal solutions are often new problems in disguise. To the degree that federal programs did generate new problems while pretending to cope with old ones, these failures occurred not because Washington acted too radically or too prodigiously, but because it acted too timidly, following corporate priorities even as it spoke in populist rhetoric. To defend the liberal record against preposterous charges from the right (including the new liberal right) is not to say that it is immune to criticism from the Democratic left. On the contrary, if a Democratic President is inaugurated in January, 1977, he (I wish I could realistically write he or she) is going to have to act forthrightly, which means that he will have to reject the big lie about the '60s. But he is also going to have to go far beyond the New Deal, the Fair Deal and the Great Society.

On November 9, 1972, the day after his landslide victory, *The Washington Star* published a historic interview with Richard Nixon. Garnett D. Horner had

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talked to the President just before the election, and the White House approved his transcript of the conversation. Clearly, the chief executive had known that he would be returned to office with a huge majority and, not dreaming that Watergate would destroy his triumph, decided to articulate the political philosophy of his second administration.

"This country," Nixon told Horner, "has enough on its plate in the way of new spending programs, social programs, throwing dollars at problems. . . . I don't believe that the answer to the nation's problems is simply massive new programs in terms of dollars and in terms of people." Then came the attack on Nixon's immediate predecessors: "What we have to realize is that many of the solutions of the '60s were massive failures. They threw money at problems and for the most part they failed." The '60s liberals, Nixon continued, had lost faith in American institutions and become purveyors of a permissiveness that led to increased crime rates, escalation of the drug problem and other manifestations of social pathology. What the people wanted and needed was "a new feeling of responsibility, a new feeling of self-discipline. . . ." All this led to Nixon's famous simile, "The average American is just like a child in the family. You give him some responsibility and he is going to amount to something."

Here are some unambiguous figures* from the Brookings Institution study of the 1976 budget that suggest just how false that Nixon myth actually is:

Permanent Federal Budget Outlays as a Percentage of GNP

	Actual		Estimated
	1960	1970	1976
Actual GNP	18.3	20.5	21.5
Full Employment GNP	17.3	20.0	18.7

The "permanent" outlays are federal expenditures exclusive of those required to compensate for cyclical movements of the economy, *e.g.* the extra $15 billion spent on unemployment compensation as compared with the level of the '60s, the result of the scandalous rate of joblessness tolerated by the Ford administration. The concept of permanent outlays focuses upon the underlying trends in federal finance. The "full employment GNP" is arbitrarily set at what output would be if unemployment were at four percent; this figure *does* take into account present economic performance. It is painfully obvious that if the percentage figures in the "actual GNP" column are projected forward, and the current incompetence of economic management is assumed as a lasting condition of American life, then it will indeed be difficult to increase social spending. However the "full employment" data offer quite a different picture of what happens in a relatively well-directed economy (I say *relatively* well directed because four percent is still an intolerable level of unemployment).

A number of obvious points leap to the eye. First the vision described by former Secretary of HEW Caspar Weinberger—that social spending is compounding at a rate that threatens to absorb more than 50 percent of GNP by the year 2000—is simply a fantasy. Even using the somewhat misleading figures for "actual GNP" and assuming that *all* federal expenditures (not just the social funds) increase at the rate of the '60s, three decades of compounding will not make Weinberger's nightmare come true in terms of total expenses, much less in terms of social spending alone.

Secondly the increase in all federal spending during the '60s was relatively modest, whether you take the actual or full employment GNP as a base. In this regard, it must also be remembered that the 1960 point of comparison expresses the priorities of Dwight David Eisenhower and that the increments are thus measured against a most conservative standard. Thirdly these statistics show that the Ford 1976 Budget, which decrees austerity for the aging, the poor and the hungry, and affluence for the military, is quite literally reactionary. Taken as a percentage of full employment GNP, it represents a retreat from the levels of the first Nixon budget. In any case, these figures make it plain that, in terms of total federal spending, the '60s did not produce some kind of gigantic jump.

It is also useful to compare the American performance with that of the other leading industrial powers. Here, I rely on a 1972 OECD report. It shows that American defense spending declined as a percentage of GNP and that there was a significant increase in the amount paid for goods and services in the civilian sphere. Taking these changes into account, the United States' expenditures on those goods and services lag behind Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom. More importantly, this country and Japan are at the very bottom of the list when it comes to transfer payments to households (monies paid out, but not in return for services rendered). At the end of the '60s, only 6.1 percent of our GNP was spent in that fashion, which was less than half of the percentage in France, Germany and Italy. Finally if one looks at the total government expenditures—and these are higher than the figures for *federal* outlays since they include state and local programs—the United States did spend more in the '60s (from 25.9 percent of GNP in 1955-57 to 31.7

*The figures used here are taken from the annual Brookings Institution analyses of the Budget, the US Treasury's Special Analyses of the 1976 Budget and the July, 1972 report of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on Expenditure Trends in OECD Countries, 1960-1970. Both Brookings and the OECD base their statistics, of course, on official government reports.

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percent in 1967-69), but in doing so only managed to catch up to, but not overtake, the European welfare states.

However there seems to be a quantum leap in certain kinds of federal social expenditures during the '60s. I take what I consider to be the most significant figures from the Brookings analysis of the 1974 Budget:

Domestic Federal Budget Expenditures, Selected Years

[Selected Categories], 1950-1974

Category	1950	1960	1970
	Billions of Dollars		
Cash income maintenance	6.7	20.6	45.8
Helping people buy essentials	2.7	1.1	14.6
Grants for social programs	0.3	1.3	8.8
	Percentage of total		
Cash income maintenance	26.7	48.2	42.1
Helping people buy essentials	10.8	2.6	13.4
Grants for social programs	1.2	3.0	8.1

These numbers seem to destroy my case. They show that cash income maintenance payments more than doubled in the '60s, going from $20.6 billion to $45.8 billion. Similarly, grants for social programs rose from $1.3 billion to $8.8 billion. Therefore, one would think, Nixon, Ford and Jerry Brown are right in their thesis that there was extensive, even radical, government spending in the last decade. And since this is now a manifestly unhappy country abounding in social problems, one must conclude inexorably that the vaunted efforts of the New Frontier and the Great Society were an extremely costly failure.

But when one looks more closely, this impression dissolves. Indeed the percentages cited above hint at the reality. There was indeed a quantum leap in federal cash income maintenance—only it took place under Dwight D. Eisenhower! In "his" decade, those programs almost doubled as a share of the total federal budget. Under Lyndon Johnson they *declined* from those high Eisenhower levels. Then, under Nixon, according to more recent data from the Brookings analysis of the 1975 Budget, the cash income maintenance percentage rose from Lyndon Johnson rates and almost returned to the Eisenhower level.

What do these bewildering numbers mean? Social Security payments began to increase rapidly during the '50s for demographic and actuarial reasons, not because public policy changed. Then during the '60s, the rise was less dramatic, and other programs began, most notably Medicare. Under Nixon—but against his will—increments in Social Security benefits were passed and the whole program was geared to reflect rises in the Consumer Price Index. Most important of all, these numbers should focus attention on the real growth sector in the federal domestic budget: programs for people over 65, primarily Social Security and Medicare. These did indeed advance during the '60s and the '70s, chiefly because the population with claims increased, which is a fact of nature and not a creation of liberal prodigality.

The category "helping people buy essentials" refers to cash transfers on tax expenditures making it possible for people to buy goods and services. It includes some of the most conservative Great Society reforms, *e.g.* tax breaks for homeowners, which favor the rich, and subsidies for the poor to buy houses, which were carefully designed to guarantee the profits of banks, developers and real estate speculators. If this category shows a significant increase in the '60s, it offers no evidence whatsoever of radical innovation.

Secondly, Social Security and Medicare are successes—flawed, incomplete and sometimes problematic—but successes nevertheless. These measures have considerably enhanced the well-being and happiness of the aging, and as a result they are very popular politically. Indeed, the main criticism that must be made of them is that they are still too timid and pinch-penny. Medicare, for instance, is a partial installment on a national health insurance plan for citizens of all ages that America, alone among the Western nations, still lacks. And finally, Social Security, the largest single social outlay, is the least bureaucratic of the federal programs. In 1971, the neo-conservative James Q. Wilson noted recently, the Social Security Administration paid out $54 billion in social insurance with a staff of only 73,000 persons.

Compared to the monies spent on social insurance and Medicare, the innovative funds inherited from the programs of the '60s are quite small. In its analysis of the 1973 budget, Brookings calculated that Great Society programs, apart from Medicare, accounted for only $13 billion. These were the quintessential Johnson programs of the so-called "service strategy" that directly provided people with goods and services (medicine, housing, food) rather than income. In the same year, the older income security expenditures were $75 billion, or five times as great. Moreover it should be stressed that the $13 billion spent on innovation was not money down the drain in any sense. It paid for Medicaid (whose main flaw is that it does not reach nearly enough people), school lunches and scholarships for higher education. It included food stamps, the first national welfare program with federal standards, an effort that even conservatives admit is justified in 85 percent of its outlays.

The same basic trends are visible in the 1976 Budget. Mr. Ford, that apostle of governmental parsimony, proposes to spend $361.3 billion. Of that $100.3 billion

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goes to defense and international spending. So the domestic budget is computed at $261 billion. Of that, $84 billion is for interest, the administration of justice and subsidies to business and farmers. The "human resources" category, then, comes to $177 billion. Of that, $110 billion goes for pensions and medical care for people over 65. Public assistance is only $9.2 billion, while the cost of Mr. Ford's incompetence in economic management—the $17 billion in unemployment compensation—is almost twice that sum. Indeed, if you take public assistance *and* Medicaid, they total $16.4 billion, which is less than the unemployment compensation occasioned by Ford-Nixon policies.

The welfare state as it emerged out of the '60s is not, and never was, a free-spending system of radical innovation. About two-thirds of its funds are devoted to the income and medical needs of the aging, and that is money well spent, even though it is not nearly adequate. The "radical" departures like legal services for the poor and community organizing never did get much money, and the truth, therefore, is as Daniel Patrick Moynihan described it in *The Politics of the Guaranteed Annual Income:* "The social reforms of the mid-decade [of the '60s] had been oversold and, with the coming of the war, underfinanced to the degree that seeming failure could be ascribed almost to intent." Leaders of the '60s talked a bold game, declaring "unconditional wars" on poverty, proclaiming a "Great Society." But there were neither vast expenditures nor structural changes.

This last point leads me from a defense of the '60s against the rightist charge that they were on a drunken, wasteful binge to a critique of the very same decade on the grounds that it did not even begin to change the fundamental determinants of the society. Jerry Brown may be right when he says that government created more problems than it solved, but for reasons diametrically opposed to the ones he cites: not because the leaders were visionary, but because they were conservative. I emphasize this fact, not because I want to settle historic accounts with the Kennedy-Johnson administrations, but because I want to stress that we must go far beyond what they did, qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

As long as private corporate control of investment is taken as a fundamental mechanism for the allocation of resources and the stimulation of growth, just so long will there be strong, structural tendencies in the American economy militating against full employment and a GNP that serves the needs of the majority of Americans. Here, and not in the imagined profligacy of the '60s, is a fundamental reason why so many well-intentioned liberal programs have failed.

In one of his last acts in office, Lyndon B. Johnson sent an Economic Report to the Congress in January, 1969. In it, he boasted—with some justice—of 95 months of continuous economic advance. "This record," he said, "demonstrates the vitality of a free economy and its capacity for steady growth. No longer do we view our economic life as a relentless tide of ups and downs." Since that claim was made, there have been two recessions, one of them the worst in a generation, and a brief boom, all in the course of a mere six years. Certainly our economic life has been a relentless tide of ups and downs. Why?

The comforting answer is that Republican incompetence and unforeseeable bad luck ganged up on the United States of America. There were Richard Nixon's horrendous economic management, the OPEC cartel, bad weather and poor harvests in the Soviet Union and so on. None of these factors is intrinsic to the American economy and the corporate dominance of investment, or so it seems at first glance. Why not accept the role of these accidents in our recent history and, without developing any grand theories, muddle through the present crisis, and pray that the Democrat who gets elected in 1976 has good luck?

That is something less than a rousing program to which one can summon the electorate in 1976; it is also a complacent and potentially disastrous analysis. Go back for a moment to Richard Nixon in 1969. He did not slam on the fiscal and monetary brakes in that year out of perversity. He was addressing himself to a very real problem, one that Hubert Humphrey would have faced had he won (and would that he had!).

Those 95 months of continuous economic advance, along with an undeclared war financed by inflation rather than taxes, had tightened the labor market, bid up workers' wages, made the unions combative, increased interest rates and prices and, as a result, cut down on profits. American business wanted to use the classic remedy against these evils, a recession. Nixon was quite willing. But then this policy cooled enthusiasm for the Republican party in the 1970 elections much more effectively than it coped with inflation. So in late 1970, Nixon marshalled all of America's economic power to achieve an overriding national purpose: his own reelection. Once that was done, he slammed on the brakes again, lifted wage and price controls, and plunged the country into its present miseries.

But how would a liberal President have dealt with those same problems? Suppose he had adopted, as some of the shrewdest people on the left proposed, a truly redistributive incomes policy? That is, instead of imposing controls, which hold down wages but not prices or profits, suppose a liberal President had instituted a genuine social contract in which the returns to the rich would be rigorously restrained while the real incomes of the poor and the working people would be allowed to rise moderately. I certainly would have favored such an approach, and did in fact call for it. But one problem would have remained. By holding down corporate profits, one would limit the prime source of new investment funds for the entire society

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and simultaneously motivate the profit-takers, who are also the allocators of the nation's resources, to a sullen strike of capital—their usual response under such circumstances.

What I am suggesting is that the arguments made regularly by Ford, William Simon, the Chase Bank and *The Wall Street Journal* about capital shortages has a certain logic, given the structure of the American economy. At the same time that these worthies have insisted upon draconian sacrifices by New York City, they have called for a legislated increase in the profit rate for the big corporations (through an even more discriminatory treatment in favor of capital gains, more loopholes for dividend income, etc.). Do not, they say, spend money on social programs for that will "crowd out" our higher priority—private capital formation. (Now it is true that their particular argument in this case is utterly specious: the recession, which the government has not fought with nearly enough vigor, has "crowded out" tens of billions of potential investment funds. Ending that waste is our most critical task, on economic as well as social grounds.) Still, their underlying point remains valid: profit income in the American economy has claim to preference as against wages and public spending since, but only since, private corporations are the nation's prime instrument for providing jobs.

But then, isn't a second obvious answer to the problem Nixon faced in 1969 precisely an expansion of the public sector? Of course. But then look back at the employment program of the Great Society. Lyndon Johnson was urged by all kinds of people—the unions, his own Commission on Civil Disorders and others—to respond to the violent eruptions in the ghettos by directly funding public service employment. Instead he acted on the philosophy of the Great Society—a vision of partnership between government and business which, in an ever-growing economy, would jointly solve social problems—and launched the JOBS (Job Opportunities in the Business Sector) effort, paying private employers to put the hard-core unemployed to work. To be sure, Johnson could have opted for the public service jobs without making any changes in the structure of the society. But that would have required that he act against the profound, inherent bias of our economic system and risk the hostility of a corporate leadership that he so very much wanted as part of his team.

Something like that logic worked on John F. Kennedy in the early '60s. He was told by John Kenneth Galbraith and the AFL-CIO that he should stimulate employment and growth by direct social investments. But he was politically weakened by a deadlocked Congress, and so he opted for a tax-cut approach which, as Leon Keyserling has documented, effectively distributed wealth to the corporate rich. Not so incidentally, Kennedy also sponsored a capital goods boom by providing for accelerated depreciation and other tax devices. Here again, the enormous economic and political power of the corporate sector asserted itself within a liberal Democratic presidency. By now, this tax discrimination in favor of the rich has become a cherished tradition: there are, the Treasury tells us, some $95 billion in tax expenditures in the 1976 budget and they go disproportionately to the wealthy.

More generally, I am suggesting that Keynesian policies are rather well suited to overcoming capitalist failure (although they work best politically when subordinated to corporate priorities). But Keynesianism cannot deal with the consequent contradictory and precarious successes. And one of the reasons is that the entire American economy is in its very structure forced by its perverse logic to defer to the wishes and wealth of the corporate rich, precisely because they possess that most crucial authority to allocate resources and create jobs. They can prove ingeniously in theory that they do these things marvelously well; in practice, they have been the instruments of our disasters.

Obviously I have merely outlined an argument, yet even in this sketchy form it is, I think, one that the Democratic left—and the Democratic party—must ponder well. The clear policy implication is that the nation must begin to move in the direction of socializing some crucial investment decisions—for instance, taking over the entire rail system within the framework of a national transportation plan and creating a TVA-type corporation to develop new energy technologies for public use, rather than private profit.

A few important points should be clear. First: America did not "throw money" at problems in the '60s. Chiefly, it purchased an increment in decency—not enough, but with some success—for people over 65. Fiscal "experts" should be asked to meditate on a rather simple proposition: that problems of people who suffer from a lack of income can indeed be solved by "throwing money" at them. Ask anyone on Social Security.

Second: government intervention did generate some spectacular difficulties as by-products of its good intentions, inflation not the least among them. But the reasons for these troubles are not to be found in our fantasized radical prodigality but in our actual subservience to corporate priorities.

Third: the worst thing that could happen in 1976 would certainly be a Republican presidential victory. The second worst thing could be a Democratic presidential victory that would bring to power people in the thrall of a Nixon myth. If that triumph is to prove a blessing rather than an embarrassment, the Democrats must begin now to think through the deep structural problems of the American economy and come up with some proposals that go far beyond the New Deal, the Fair Deal and the Great Society. The Roosevelt-Kennedy-Johnson orthodoxy is now established, even conservative truth. It is not enough.

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Good Causes and Lost Causes

Requiem for ERA

by Marion K. Sanders

On November 4, New Jersey and New York voters decisively turned down state Equal Rights Amendments. The latter defeat, by a margin of some 400,000 votes was a stunning blow to the amendment's backers. It had, after all, been twice passed by the legislature, which was one of the first to ratify the federal amendment. In addition, the New York Coalition for ERA was a civic powerhouse including, besides feminist groups, such establishment pillars as the League of Women Voters, the AFL-CIO and the State Republican Committee. The opposition, in contrast, was a tatterdemalion band of ad hoc committees identified by odd acronyms plus such bastions of the right as the Knights of Columbus, the Conservative party and the DAR.

What happened?

Out of journalistic curiosity I spent a good part of October as a front line observer of the ERA campaign. It was an unsettling experience. By the end of the month I had concluded that ERA was doomed and probably deserved to be. The proponents had failed to establish how or in what measure ERA would advance the equality of women. Their adversaries, on the other hand, by fair means and foul, had effectively promulgated their conviction that the amendment would give new rights to men, deprive women of some they believe they now have and impose new responsibilities on them. Evidently this was the message that got through to the voters.

My inquiry began at a meeting of the Republican Club of Richmond Hills, Queens, an enclave of modest one and two family houses familiar to anyone who has seen the opening sequence of "All in the Family" on TV. The audience—chiefly middle-aged and elderly women—seemed to include a hundred Edith Bunkers. The speaker was Phyllis Schlafly of Illinois, a seasoned campaigner on the right wing circuit. A Catholic and mother of six, she is well known to those of us who have been involved in the battle for legalized abortion and can scarcely forget her strident and sanguinary diatribes in defense of the rights of the fetus.

In Richmond Hills, however, she explained in calm and measured tones why ERA is superfluous. "Equality in pay? In education? In access to credit? All are already guaranteed by law. So you have nothing to gain." To cries of horror, she tossed out some of the more absurd anti-ERA arguments such as the prospect of coeducational public toilets. Then came the crunch: "Do you know what you will lose? Men will no longer be required to support their families as now mandated by statute in every state. Your husband can get off scot-free financially in case of divorce. Do you want to be responsible for his debts? Or to be left penniless if he walks out on you? The older woman is the most endangered."

Gray heads nodded. A standing ovation followed her peroration, "We beat it in Illinois. You can do it here!"

Clearly the Edith Bunkers were scared. But something beyond fear had also been stirred—the resentment that the demeaning rhetoric of the feminists has roused in housewifely bosoms. There was no mistaking or underestimating this phenomenon when I lunched with Mrs. Annette Stern of Westchester who headed an anti-ERA group known as WUNDER (Women United to Defend Equal Rights).

"I've never been into politics," she said. "I was happy being what I call a 'home executive.' Then one day I heard Betty Friedan say it was degrading to be a housewife. A woman has a right to stay home if she wants to. That's what the family is all about. I'm not going to stand for having my role denigrated." Mrs. Stern had been debating ERA before assorted civic groups. "The audiences are with me," she said. "'Specially if the other speaker is one of those women's lib types who talks about 'a radical restructuring of society.'"

The previous evening a suburban friend of mine who is a dedicated Democratic committeewoman had phoned me in some distress. "This ERA thing is driving me up the wall," she said. "The women here don't understand what it will do for them. So I called my assemblywoman—she's very big on ERA—and asked her. Instead of answering me she got mad. I still don't know what I'm supposed to say."

I posed her question shortly afterward to State Senator Karen Burstein, a leading ERA sponsor. A lawyer who looks considerably younger than her 33 years, she has an intense manner suggesting an overwound spring. A torrent of words poured forth as she gesticulated with clenched fists. The monologue was, in effect, a replay of the familiar debating points of ERA literature with which I was abundantly supplied.

When she paused for breath I asked her to change

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course, pointing out that the opposition seemed to have thrown her side off balance. Instead of answering objections would she please state the case positively. "Very well," she said "We have laws mandating certain kinds of equality. But they're only laws. They could be abrogated or rewritten if the political climate changes. ERA is a floor under the progress we have made." This is a point often stressed by attorneys who have taken on the rugged task of fighting discrimination cases in the courts. Other experienced lawyers, however, claim that the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment provides an adequately sturdy constitutional base.

Sen. Burstein next launched into a recital of the rebufts and humiliations she and other women suffer in the legislature. There was, for instance, the time a burly guard required her to produce a pass to get into her own office at midnight and then remarked, "It kills me to call you girls Senator." "That," she said, "is the kind of pain we suffer every day."

One doubts that a constitutional amendment would assuage such pains, though a sense of humor might help. Ridicule might also have been a sharp weapon against the more outrageous fabrications of the opposition, such as the charge that ERA would legalize homosexual marriages. Instead there were solemn rebuttals whose impact was weakened by the presence on the Coalition masthead of Lesbian Feminist Liberation. This sisterly gesture typified the political ineptitude of a movement euphoric because of spectacular successes, but which had failed to analyze the reasons for them.

Happily, defeat seems to have triggered some soul searching. The essential fact to be faced is that militant feminism remains—as it has long been—an upper middle-class movement that can only gain victories when it focuses on goals that appeal to a far broader audience than its own limited constituency. This has always been the case. The suffrage movement, for example, did not achieve even the semblance of a mass base until it formed an alliance with the temperance movement.

Today's feminists are a much larger minority than in times past. Their ranks have been augmented by the vastly increased numbers of college women in recent years, and their effectiveness has been heightened by the assertiveness stirred in the 1960s by Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*. However, the National Organization of Women, which she founded, claims a mere 50,000 members. Despite its small numbers NOW has been a potent lobby when it backed concrete issues that touched women beyond its own narrow circle of activists. The Equal Employment Act, for instance, is meaningful to any woman who works whether as a phone operator or a research scientist. And in the much bloodier battle for legalized abortion the cause had the fervent backing of the legion of women who fear or have experienced unwanted pregnancies.

ERA, in contrast, is a statement of principle for which only synthetic zeal can be roused. This has been so ever since 1923 when it was introduced in Congress at the behest of Alice Paul, a stormy petrel of the suffrage movement. The amendment stirred no enthusiasm and the National Women's Party she founded attracted just a handful of rich ladies and successful professional women. (Only 25 turned up at a meeting this year, summoned to succor Miss Paul who, at 90, is destitute.) Having mouldered in committee for nearly 50 years, why was the amendment exhumed?

My guess is that, after a succession of victories, NOW and its allies began to worry that they were running out of causes. "Equal rights" seemed a fine nationwide rally cry. And so it was, at the outset, sailing virtually unopposed through both houses of Congress, winning almost instant ratification in 34 states. It now appears, however, that the four additional states needed for passage will be hard, if not impossible to come by.

A formidable grass roots opposition has been roused and heartened by the New York-New Jersey debacle. Though its meaning was largely symbolic, ERA did signify a will to change the established order, a prospect that is anathema to those who cling to things as they are. But without benefit of ERA the ways of the world—and of the law—are changing. Most judges, for example, are today loath to award alimony to a potentially self-supporting wife, or automatically to give her custody of the children. The courts have had little success in extracting support payments from reluctant husbands who simply vanish. And with or without ERA, men will continue to be family breadwinners so long as they enjoy that role and some women cherish their dependency. So it is difficult to see precisely what the anti-ERA forces have won, except, perhaps, the prospect of more respectful treatment of housewives by feminists.

And to the other side, to the young women weeping into their discarded ERA T-shirts, one might say: cheer up, you really haven't lost anything, except time and energy that might have been better spent. Passage of ERA would not have tempered the hostility of male chauvinists; nor produced the day care centers desperately needed by working mothers; nor eased the lot of the elderly, a majority of whom happen to be women; nor helped elect more able women to major offices. So, please, let's forget the symbols and slogans and get on with the job.

COMING: Paul R. Wieck on the recycling of Hubert Humphrey

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

The Magic Flute

(Surrogate)

Ingmar Bergman, the only director (with the just-possible exception of Luchino Visconti) who could have done it, has made an exhilarating film of Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*. Most of Bergman's career, contrary to impressions abroad, has been spent in the theater, where he has directed—besides every kind of play—opera and operetta. Presumably because of his extraordinary double career, the Swedish State Broadcasting system commissioned him to make this film. It was planned for three years and was made in nine months. It was first televised on New Year's Day 1975 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Swedish Radio. On the Day of the Judging of Nations, a lot will be forgiven Sweden for having wanted and produced such a celebration.

Films of opera began when sound films began. One of the first sound films I can remember is a short of Titta Ruffo singing Iago's "Credo." Color films of complete operas are now relatively common and sometimes are musically good, but cinematically they are little more than visually accompanied recordings. This, as one would expect, was precisely what Bergman was not after. Obviously he didn't want merely to record a stage performance. (Who needs Bergman for that?) On the other hand, he didn't want to divorce the opera completely from theatrical context. (How can you make an opera, particularly an 18th-century work, entirely "real"?) Bergman's solution was to use *both* of the above approaches, combined with a third: consciousness of the performance itself, by integrating shots of the theater audience and of backstage doings. He converts what happens on the stage of the opera house into a fusion of what has been brought to the theater both by the performers and the audience, and he makes his camera a kind of divine eye observing a high manifestation of human community.

Before I detail some aspects of the cinematic triumph I need to note some debatable aspects in Bergman's conception of *The Magic Flute* as such. No libretto of a major opera has been more argued about than Emanuel Schikaneder's for this work. Many have criticized apparent lumps and schisms and a strong flavor of anti-feminism. Everyone has known, however vaguely, that the book has some connection with Freemasonry. (The librettist and the composer were Masons.) In 1971 Knopf published a book called *The Magic Flute: Masonic Opera* by the French musicologist Jacques Chailley, in which Chailley argues powerfully that, far from being disjointed, the libretto is an organic work of Masonic symbolism.

Bergman avoids involvement in this argument. I don't suggest that he ought to have accepted Chailley's views or anyone else's, but Bergman treats the opera from start to finish merely as a fairy tale, accessible to children (he emphasizes this at the start) and conveying childlike simplicities to adults. Certainly the story of Tamino and Pamina is, when reduced, a fairy-tale romance, but is that all that Mozart intended? When Tamino sings *"Wie stark ist nicht dein Zauberton"*, animals and birds appear and are charmed, but are they supposed to be cuddly Christmas-parade animals? Several of the songs contain moral injunctions, but is Bergman justified in inscribing those lessons on signs which the singers hold up as they sing the lines? Goethe said (as quoted by Chailley): "More knowledge is required to understand the value of this libretto than to mock it." Bergman even makes Sarastro conform to his childhood impression, as he notes in the booklet in the record album from this film. When he was very young and saw *The Magic Flute*, he assumed that Sarastro was Pamina's father, now estranged from her mother, The Queen of the Night. Bergman knows now of course that this is not the case, but he has altered the text to make it fit his childhood feeling.

I think that his general concept diminishes the great work. But whatever Bergman's concept of the opera, his filming of that concept is wonderful. Our first sight is the grounds of Drottningholm Palace outside Stockholm, neoclassical statuary under the trees, while a few birds pipe tentatively. Then we go into the famous 18th-century Drottningholm theater (actually reconstructed in a studio for filming purposes); the overture begins, and, one by one, we see some faces in the audience, including the briefest view of Bergman himself. The first face, seen longest and returned to frequently in the course of the performance, is of an enchanting girl about eight (Bergman's daughter); her face is Bergman's figurative avenue to this opera.

The curtain rises and the opera begins as a theater performance. Very soon we come in for close looks, which are varied throughout with long "whole-stage" shots. The close work not only covers all scene changes and mechanical effects, which occur out of our sight, but they also transmute the scene we are looking at from part of a theater performance to a moment of filmed "reality" occurring within the screen frame just like any "real" shot in any film. But the *making* both of the stage performance and of this reality is pressed into the larger reality of the film. For instance, as the orchestra plays the opening of Papageno's first air we see him leap off a cot in his dressing room, run downstairs to the wings, grab his cage, pick up his pipes just in time to play his little flourish, and make his entrance right on cue. During the intermission we go backstage and see Sarastro studying the score of *Parsifal* while next to him one of Monostatos' imps reads a comic book; Tamino and Pamina play chess. All the world, agrees Bergman, *is* a stage. But by keeping the literal stage at the heart of the world, he has kept the integrity of the operatic form while allowing the

Films Worth Seeing

Dog Day Afternoon. Al Pacino shines as homosexual bank robber in fantastic tale based on fact that ends fuzzily.

Nashville. Multi-stranded story of country-music world, supposed to be US in little. Much littler than it thinks but smoothly done.

Rooster Cogburn. John Wayne and Katharine Hepburn lolling around pleasantly in hokey sequel to *True Grit.*

Swept Away. Italian desert island romance, sharply done on the island, shabby back on the mainland.

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new form—film—to deepen it. (Some have compared this film with Olivier's *Henry V*. This is careless. Olivier's film begins in a theater but ranges far away; *The Magic Flute* never leaves the theater building, and the stage is its center.)

Bergman's cinematographer, as usual, was Sven Nykvist; I hope I need not say more. The designs are by Henny Noremark. The conductor was Eric Ericson, leading the Swedish State Broadcasting Network Symphony.

This brings us to the cast and to another daring and successful action on Bergman's part. The score was recorded in advance, which is standard practice, then played back as the performers worked for the cameras. One option at this point, sometimes exercised in opera films, was to use a different cast, non-singers, to mime the singing and do the acting. Bergman rejected this; he selected singers for his recording who could look the parts (one exception) and could act. This, I think, was not only so that the actors would really look as if they were capable of making the sounds we hear but because there is an indefinable yet perceptible difference between the physical bearing of opera singers and of actors, a larger rhythm in singers' movement. I don't remotely mean that these singers overact: it's their *rightness* that I'm talking about.

The text is in Swedish but the cast is international. Papageno (Hakan Hakegard) and the Queen of the Night (Birgit Nordin) are Swedish: Sarastro (Ulrik Cold) is Danish, Tamino (Josef Köstlinger) is Austrian, Pamina (Irma Urrila) is Finnish. Only Urrila is a cinematic mistake; she's too old to play Pamina in a film.

For me the great performance of *The Magic Flute* is the one recorded under Sir Thomas Beecham in Berlin in 1937. The performance for this film is not in that class. But it is lovely listening; and the flowing wizardry of Bergman's camera, justifying at last the presence of opera on film, makes it even lovelier.

Sublime-to-Ridiculous Note. Middle-aged Walter Matthau and old George Burns are the two ancient vaudevillians in the film of *The Sunshine Boys*. Neil Simon's play is no better than it was (*TNR*, Jan. 27, '73)—maybe even weaker now that it's been "opened up." But before the script collapses, about halfway through, Matthau and Burns often had me collapsing with laughter. Very funny men. And as Matthau's agent-nephew Richard Benjamin gives his most skillful performance to date.

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THE YEAR'S BOOKS
(Part I)

Harold Bloom on Poetry

Any brief review of the year's poetry reflects the reviewer's vision of the entire tradition of American poetry, since all readers, on some level, work to maintain the continuity of their own selves. A critic like Hugh Kenner probably would find this year's significant volumes of verse to include books by George Oppen, Louis Zukofsky and the late Charles Olson. That would reflect a vision that saw Pound, Eliot and Williams as the central American poets of this century. I myself prefer E. A. Robinson, Frost, Stevens and Hart Crane, who seem to me the rightful inheritors of Emerson, Whitman and Dickinson and therefore *my* choices among this year's books are sure to be affected by my own view of tradition. Doubtless, this is a limitation, but no critic is or can be free of such limitation. Idealizers of poetry, of teaching and of criticism like to say that *they* read accurately and selflessly, but such an assertion is always a self-deception. America is the Evening Land, or the last phase of Mediterranean culture, and this late in tradition all reading (and writing) is heavily shadowed by the past. Where the shadow is so long and so dark, reading and writing inevitably manifest defensive patterns, whatever the overt intentions and ideals of readers or writers.

I have no hesitation in judging the year's most vital and permanent book of poems to be John Ashbery's *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (Viking; $6.95). Ashbery, and A. R. Ammons, increasingly appear to be the major poets of my own generation (which is now middle-aged), though they have such substantial rivals as James Wright, W. S. Merwin and James Merrill, among many others. Ashbery is a genuinely Whitmanian poet, not of the barbaric yawp variety (which Whitman himself was not, anyway) but in recapturing the subtle ambiance of Whitman's best years (1855-1860), with their delicacy and limpidity of style, enormous range of *materia poetica* and alternately affectionately relaxed and gently anguished portrayal of the self. *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* returns Ashbery to his best mode, as exemplified by his most beautiful previous book, *The Double Dream of Spring*. From Stevens, Ashbery appears to have taken his working principle that poetry and *materia poetica* are the same thing, which is a fatal recipe for others, but triumphant in Whitman as in these two descendants, different as they are from one another and from the greatest of all our poets. Ashbery's way of putting this can be exemplified from *Grand Galop*, which with the title-poem is one of the two best and longest poems in the book: "The lies fall like flaxen threads from the skies/ All over America, and the fact that some of them are true of course/ Doesn't so much not matter as serve to justify/ The whole mad organizing force under the billows of correct delight." Ashbery's genius is for a metaphysical pathos that borders comedy but generally waits in a study of the nostalgias just beyond the comic. His poetry, in its difficulty and in its rewards, can be epitomized by the closing lines of the first poem in this book: "The summer demands and takes away too much,/ But night, the reserved, the reticent gives more than it takes."

A. R. Ammons, the other truly strong poet of my generation, is represented this year by a fine volume of lyrics, *Diversifications* (Norton; $6.95), which gracefully extends his ongoing achievement. There are no new departures here, but there are poems that join all but the heights of previous Ammons. Consistently an Emersonian, Ammons writes in a ceaseless dialectic of ethos or Fate struggling with pathos or Power, and is triumphant in the sparse but wonderful syntheses of Freedom that emerge in new poems like "Narrows," "Ballad," "The Unmirroring Peak," and most clearly in "Pray Without Ceasing," the longer, incantatory poem that ends

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the book with a chilled but assured comfort: "pray without ceasing:/ we found hailstones in the grass/ and ate them to cool:/ spurred stones/ with interior milkwhite halos,/ an arrested spangling:/ the high hard water/ melted/ aching our tongues."

I move on to three poets of extraordinary skill and profound emotion who are linked frequently by reviewers as a school of sophistication, but who share nothing save excellence and a publisher (Atheneum): John Hollander, Howard Moss, Daryl Hine. Hollander's *Tales Told of the Fathers* ($7.95), more even than his previous work, indicates the movement of another American poet into the bitterness of strength. Hollander's burden is that his verse somehow combines Ben Jonson and Shelley in a single body, an uncanny and unique blending that in Hollander has the force of a fatality. Like Ashbery and Ammons, Hollander also struggles, out of necessity, with the overpowering shade of Stevens. The wonder of *Tales Told of the Fathers* is that Hollander now integrates all the diverse strains of his poetic nature. At his best, as in the long poem or sequence, "The Head of the Bed," Hollander can be compared to Ashbery as being in the line of Stevens without merely yielding to the precursor's power. But Hollander also is emerging into a plangent voice related to Yiddish poetry, movingly evident in the title-sequence, "Tales Told of the Fathers," as in a parable of Hillel taken from the Talmud: "When he saw a skull floating/ On the face of the waters/ With a mind of air and eyes/ Of wind, it was not a sign/ Of drowning generations/ Themselves now drowned . . . / But part of . . . / The dark, hollow shard of a /Vessel of decreated/ Clay, a cup of life emptied." This voice of erudite lament, troubled by a final knowledge, and intensely sad when it intends to be most stoical, is Hollander's true voice of feeling, and prophesies a major phase to come.

Howard Moss, like Hollander, is an underrated poet. Where Hollander, until now, has been too varied and restless to give readers a sense of ease, of expectations aroused and fulfilled, Moss has been (but in the best sense) too quiet and almost quietistic to attract really wide attention. Yet *Buried City* ($6.95), his new book, will give deep pleasure to any reader searching for a mature art that addresses itself to the observed, urban world. New York City is seen throughout this book more keenly than in any other poems I know. The long title-poem is particularly distinguished, and evokes Valéry without being destroyed by the comparison, an achievement to be brooded over, and to be reread frequently.

The Canadian poet, Daryl Hine, resembles Hollander and Moss only in being, as they are, a consummate artist. But Hine's work is savage in temperament, the work of a more exacerbated sensibility. Every poem in *Resident Alien* ($6.95) repays a close reading, but the most remarkable are the last three: an elegy for the critic, Marius Bewley; "Vowel Movements," which is a disconcerting meditation on the relation between sex and language; and last and best, "Letter To Shadow," a frightening envoi on the horror of the vanishing of present time, and its replacement, for the poet, by "the battlefield/ Of words, which always was a massacre."

Another extraordinary volume of poetry by a Canadian this year is Jay Macpherson's *Welcoming Disaster* (Toronto: Saannes Publications; $2.50 paper). Macpherson has only one previous volume, *The Boatman*, and her admirers like myself have waited for another book with authentic eagerness. *Welcoming Disaster* is an even darker book than Hine's *Resident Alien*, and it requires repeated rereadings to see how powerfully Macpherson asserts herself as a legitimate descendant of Dickinson.

The best book of British poetry published in the United States for several decades is Geoffrey Hill's *Somewhere Is Such a Kingdom: Poems 1952-1971* (Houghton Mifflin; $6.95,$3.95 paper). Hill, in my judgment, is much the strongest British poet now alive, and is now published here for the first time. He is a difficult, gnomic poet, whose themes are painful and intense, but he should be read by anyone who cares for poetry. Nineteen years of heroic and sublime labor have given Hill only 125 pages of verse, but there are no bad or wasted poems in his pages.

Of the year's many "first volumes," the most promising are *The Heisenberg Variations* of John Bricuth (University of Georgia Press; $7.50, $3.95 paper). Bricuth is an exuberant reincarnation of Hart Crane, and his poems are worthy of the lineage. Space precludes mentioning many other books of value, but I strongly recommend the Horatian good sense and healthy erotic boisterousness of *The Art of Love* by Kenneth Koch (Random House; $6.95). Finally the most valuable of the year's reissues, W.

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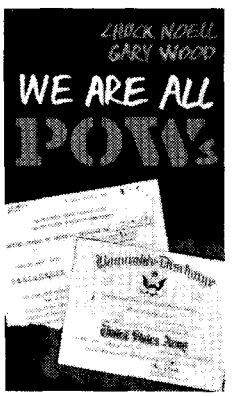

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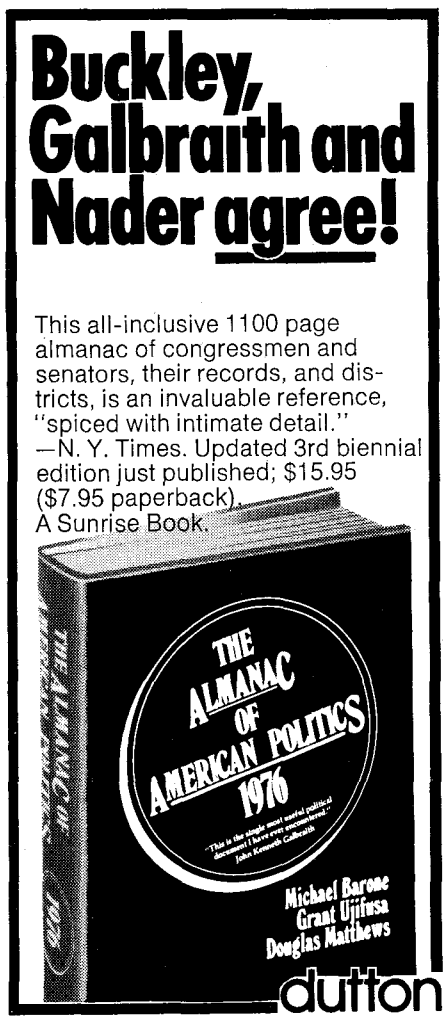
S. Merwin's *The First Four Books of Poems* (Atheneum; $10, $5.95 paper) prompts me to pay tribute to an unsung hero of contemporary poetry, Harry Ford. Ford is both the poetry editor of Atheneum, where he maintains the highest standard of poetry-publication in the country, and (with Kathleen Carey) the designer responsible for the handsomest volumes of verse now being printed, worthy of the distinguished group of poets who march forth from Atheneum.

Our two best living poets, Robert Penn Warren and Elizabeth Bishop, continue to do their most significant writing. With a group of poets of the middle generation as strong as those mentioned here, and there are many others, we have the paradox that contemporary poetry is flourishing even as the national culture and morale appear to be in disorder.

Harold Bloom teaches at Yale. His recent books include *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford Univ. Press), *Kabbalah and Criticism* (Seabury-Continuum Books) and *Poetry and Repression* (Yale Univ. Press).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Nelson Polsby on Political Science

I restrict my recommendations to recent works, not all of them published this year, but close enough to run no serious risk of being out of date by Christmas morning. After that, who knows? A bit of full disclosure: I know personally all the authors of the books I am about to recommend, and in some cases even like the authors as much as I do their books. In political science, personal acquaintance is for all practical purposes unavoidable. There are only a couple of thousand political scientists anywhere in the world who have published as much as a page of scholarship. In the natural course of events over the years many of us who do that sort of thing get to know one another. Not all contributions to political science are necessarily written by card-carrying political scientists, of course, and in order to illustrate the point I am recommending two books by civilians.

The first of these is by the thoughtful Washington journalist, Elizabeth Drew, whose *Washington Journal* (Random House; $12.95) seems to me in danger of being neglected in favor of flashier, but far less intelligent and sound treatments of Watergate. Drew's book is about the impact of the unfolding revelations of Watergate on the amorphous community of official and semi-official Washington. The struggle within this community to understand what was being revealed, and then to act on that understanding, makes a powerful and suspenseful story which Drew tells accurately and well.

I am more and more convinced that the best way to understand how and why things happen in politics is to study the communities in which events are embedded, the norms and expectations people have and what happens when they are violated, the folkways that govern how people in politics, as in every other walk of life, go about their daily activities. A book that explores another side of this central problem is Richard Fenno's *Congressmen in Committees* (Little, Brown; $7.95, $4.95 paper), the product of sensitive field work on Capitol Hill, and much deep thought. Fenno is one of the great master craftsmen of political science. Watching him put an argument together about the causes and effects of the way Congress organizes into committees is like watching an inspired artisan assemble a complex piece of furniture into a finished product without the use of nails or glue. There is so much drivel published every year about Congress (never mind what is available every week) that readers should jump for joy when a book appears that really explains how things work in that fascinating institution, and why they work the way they do. Despite the fact that many changes have come to Congress in the short time since Fenno's book was published, the book stands up remarkably well as a description of the varied goals of members of Congress, how these goals tend to be differently accommodated by the different congressional committees, and how this shapes the results of committee action and the laws of the land.

Although Congress-watchers would undoubtedly claim otherwise, the most famously impenetrable ruling group in the democratic world today is probably not Congress, but the British governing class. It is a mystery to me why more scholars have not tackled the challenge of studying British policy-making head on, but the fact is, few of them have. By all odds the most successful study of that very special sub-culture in recent years is the book by Hugo Heclo and Aaron Wildavsky on British public expenditures policy, *The Private Government of Public Money* (Univ. of California Press; $15.75). The British officials I have talked with about this book have been unanimous in their praise of the realism and sophistication of its description of how Britain is governed, and they were particularly tickled at how little Heclo and Wildavsky were deceived by the polite evasions and superficialities that British civil servants palm off on their less observant visitors.

A quite different look at elite political culture is provided by Robert D. Putnam's *The Beliefs of Politicians* (Yale Univ. Press; $10.95), an account of interviews in depth exploring the political philosophies of parliamentarians in Britain and Italy. Here the effort is directed at finding out what makes politics in these two societies different, how politicians variously value conflict and harmony in public affairs, how they define and deal with friends and foes, what their notions are of the "givens" of human nature. Putnam's book is at once an

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essay on central issues in political philosophy and an investigation of the ideas of flesh and blood politicians in two contrasting settings. This would have been a remarkable tour de force for any scholar, but it is all the more remarkable that this gracefully written virtuoso performance happens to have been Putnam's doctoral dissertation.

Closer to home, Jeane Kirkpatrick has in *Political Woman* (Basic Books; $10), done for American women state legislators what Putnam did for European parliamentarians, which is to say, she has listened carefully as they have described their careers, their ambitions and their problems. The result is a book that stands head and shoulders above the pack of "best-sellers" that have exploited popular interest in the political activation of women. One central problem shared by the successful politicians Kirkpatrick studied is their deviance from a significant societal norm, and not merely a norm of US society, for if they were not deviant, then positions of political leadership would be parceled out equally among adults of both sexes. How these unusually accomplished women deal with their exceptional status in situations requiring appeals to popular majorities at election time and cooperation with more ordinary politicians in the course of their legislative work is an important theme in this unsentimental, level-headed book.

Level-headedness is likewise characteristic of two absorbing works of policy analysis published this year by political scientists. The first is by Austin Ranney, who is frequently acknowledged to be the profession's foremost student of political parties. Ranney's reflections on his role a few years ago on the McGovern-Fraser Commission to reform the Democratic party serve as an occasion for a broad-gauged historical look at the goals and accomplishments of party reform in America. *Curing the Mischiefs of Faction* (Univ. of California Press; $8.50), embodies a skeptical view of the McGovern Commission's recommendations, and provides a valuable framework for the observation of the present prospective evolution of the American party system.

If Ranney is skeptical in his analysis of party reform, James Q. Wilson in *Thinking About Crime* (Basic Books; $10), is downright pessimistic. And for similar reasons. "Man," says Wilson, in a paraphrase of Reinhold Niebuhr, "is refractory enough to be unchangeable but reasonable enough to be adaptable." This is a basic assumption on which is bottomed all realistic public policy analysis, a task to which political scientists are more and more turning. After spending long and thoughtful hours in police stations, Wilson's view of what can be done about the burgeoning crime rate boils down to not much, but a little. Since that little is all too often obscured by clichés, a book like Wilson's, which confronts and clears away clichés, is extremely useful.

My final recommendation is a sentimental choice, not only for me but no doubt for other *New Republic* readers. When Alexander M. Bickel died last year, he left behind a collection of essays that constituted a substantial down payment on his hope to develop a political philosophy more adequate to the complexities of the moral dilemmas posed by contemporary policy-making, and are alert to the teachings of the Whig tradition of liberalism first articulated in the 18th century by Edmund Burke. *The Morality of Consent* (Yale Univ. Press; $10) is a fascinating beginning, a searchlight into the future, a book full of promises that, owing to Bickel's tragic passing, others will have to redeem.

To people who think seriously about public affairs, and who have a decent respect for the tragic dimension of responsible choice, a dimension which requires the most scrupulous attention to the moral foundations of public action, *The Morality of Consent* will speak vividly in a voice we all shall sorely miss.

Nelson W. Polsby is professor of political science at the University of California, Berkeley. *Political Promises*, a collection of his essays on American politics, was published last fall (Oxford Univ. Press).

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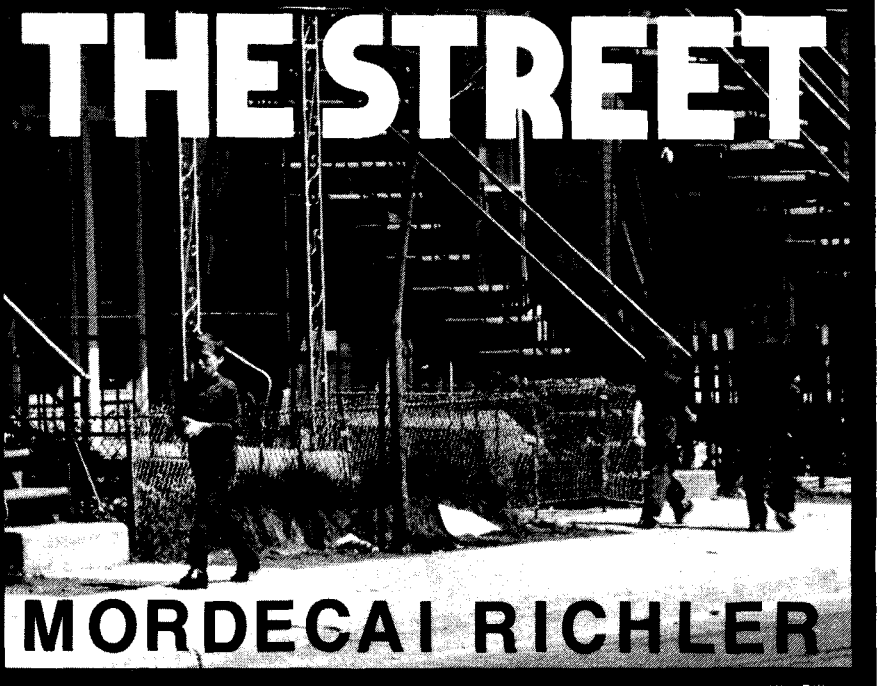

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Richard Ellmann on Biography

Biographies of men and women who have played a part in history emphasize the convergence of the individual with social forces, and do not often fasten on what they were like when alone. But a writer's life must necessarily be passed largely in seclusion, closeted with the implements of his profession, turned inward in order to turn outward. Some writers have been historical as well as literary personages, and among recent biographies, two deal with men of this kind, Sir Walter Ralegh and Samuel Pepys. John Winton's *Sir Walter Ralegh* (Coward, McCann's Geoghegan; $15) is a text with pictures, not a form conducive to penetration in depth; he emphasizes Ralegh's versatility, and his contradictions, but without explanation. Richard Ollard's *A Biography of Pepys* (Holt, Rinehart, Winston; $12.50) is more ambitious and better written. Ollard is sensitive to the delights, and the quirks, of Pepys' *Journal*, but he has no theory of his own to explain why Pepys kept such a record, and he skirts the obscurer regions of Pepys' mind.

In biographies of men who were neither bribed nor beheaded, who were mere writers, problems of motivation are central. Whether or not a book calls itself by the forbidding title of "critical biography," it cannot shirk a responsibility for the private thoughts as they emerge in books. Not that the criticism need entail close examination of each text: still the feel and savor of the writings, and the intentions, conscious or not, which brought them into being, have to be evoked. Yet a danger arises that the biographer may press in too officiously, chaperoning his subject according to an *a priori* scheme. The subjects of biographies, like the characters of novels, seem happiest when their personalities shine through the orderly patterns in which they are placed.

In the last years literary biographies have shown considerable sophistication of the form. They seek a complex harmony of historical, critical and psychological components. It is rare now to come upon the impressionist extreme of essences without facts, or the chronicler's extreme of facts without essences. Most biographers document their material, though some do it in such a way as to half-cover their tracks. The influence of new criticism may be on the wane, but it has had the salutary effect of promoting the study of connecting tissues inside and between individual works; this, in turn, has encouraged biographers to defy new-critical theory by attempting to anastomose those tissues with the lives of their subjects. As for modern psychology, the influence of Freud shows itself more in the way biographers feel they must touch upon once secret matters than in any orthodox application of Freudian theory.

Happily biography defies universal formulas. It doesn't seem possible to write in anything like the same way books about George Sand and Thomas Hardy, although both were novelists, or about Edith Wharton and William Carlos Williams, although both were Americans. George Sand's life was waged as much in public as Hardy's private. Her love affairs with Musset, Chopin and the rest help to give 19th-century France an erotic flavor. Yet Curtis Cate's *George Sand, A Biography* (Houghton Mifflin; $15) never masters the profusion of material that he must include. Though he records relentlessly the books she wrote and the lovers she bedded, his analysis of the factors involved is perfunctory. Anyone reading her famous correspondence with Flaubert will be struck by the subtlety of her understanding of Flaubert, and of her exposition of her own brand of social concern. She is more up to date than her biographer will allow.

Hardy had his social concerns too, and Robert Gittings in *Young Thomas Hardy* (Heinemann; [London] £4.95) take the view that Hardy's sensitivity about class, both before and after he changed social classes, was the mainspring of his talent. As an explanation of the novels or poems this seems inadequate, but it does help to explain Hardy's effort to destroy records of his early life. Gittings has as a result far less to recount than Cate. He has dug into old records and family traditions, and he has cleverly decoded Hardy's juxtapositions of dates and passages in an old Bible and figured out to which of Hardy's experiences these must refer. On certain controversial subjects of Hardy's life he appears to offer conclusive verdicts. Hardy did not have a bastard child by his cousin Tryphena Sparks, but he did propose marriage to her and was also enamored of her two sisters. Hardy's first wife was not insane or nearly so: his second wife spread the rumor to mitigate her husband's guilt feelings about the unhappiness of the earlier marriage. Gittings has other fresh and valuable information, but at the end of his book Hardy remains almost as opaque as at the beginning. If old conjectures are discredited, new ones must be offered.

With R.W.B. Lewis' *Edith Wharton* (Harper & Row; $15) and Reed Whittemore's *William Carlos Williams: Poet from Jersey* (Houghton & Mifflin; $10.95) we enter the full complexity of the biographical form. They are very different books. Lewis, though he likes Edith Wharton, is fairly detached. She lived one of those long, majestic lives spanning two centuries, from 1862 to 1937, and moving with logistical dexterity between two continents. The stately form of Lewis' book is a signal accomplishment. Wharton was wealthy and well-born enough to be a snob, but she could anatomize snobbery as sharply as if she were not one. Mansioned and surrounded by moneyed friends, she kept to a surprising extent her integrity and intensity as novelist. A good deal of unhappiness went into the mix. Marriage to a dolt, sexual revulsion, breakdown were alleviated by an affair with an American journalist named Morton Fullerton which, though shortlived, provided her with a gauge of intensity. Lewis discusses her books as well as her life, but the former perhaps not sufficiently from the inside to disclose her psychic processes.

An attractive aspect of his book is the presence in it of Henry James, who said he was scared of Edith Wharton but travelled and corresponded with her. At moments his personality is in danger of overshadowing hers, and Reed Whittemore, in his good biography of William Carlos Williams, runs the same danger of having Williams overshadowed by his more authoritative friend, Ezra Pound. But Whittemore brings his subject through this and other perils.

A mandarin style such as Lewis' would not do at all for Williams, who sought and saw a more dishevelled reality than Wharton could have endured. So Whittemore has composed his book in a plainman style which is almost a pastiche of Williams' own manner. The advantage of the method is that Williams can be shown wrestling with problems of imagism, for example, as if they were medical problems of his patients. The method is shrewd though not altogether persuasive, for it waters down real complexities. I am not sure that Whittemore is just to either Willi-

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ams or Pound when he says, "The world was for WCW a hereness, a thereness for Pound." (And, though Whittemore affects to be the antiacademic, such a sentence as, "He was not idle literarily," indicates that his fastidiousness has its limits.) It could be said of Williams, as Eliot said of Lawrence, that he had to write often badly in order to write sometimes well, and a less contagious style might mark out more clearly the high places from the low. Yet Williams is a most difficult subject, and Whittemore has done pretty well by him.

Richard Ellmann is Goldsmith's Professor of English at Oxford, and editor of *Selected Joyce Letters* (Viking).

B.H. Haggin on Music Criticism

A music critic is presumed to be a professional listener with the special powers of perception and judgment that enable him to make his non-professional readers aware of what they might not notice by themselves; but in practice what he says is found to be true by some readers when they listen and not by others. For a piece of music is a communication of a special kind, representing the operation of the composer's sensitivity to his medium of sound moving in time and—through this sensitivity—his personal resources of mind, emotion and the rest; and what it communicates is affected by the differences in its *recipients'* sensitivity to the medium and *their* personal resources. And so what a critic reports is not the single possible truth about a piece of music or a performance, but what is true for him and becomes true for the readers who find it confirmed when they listen.

To say that two of the past year's books—the collections of reviews and articles in Robert Craft's *Prejudices in Disguise* (Knopf; $7.95) and Andrew Porter's *A Musical Season* (Viking; $10)—were made notable for me by their authors' possession of the critic's essential equipment of perception and judgment, is to say that as a reader I found in the writing a great deal that was confirmed by my experience as a listener—enough to outweigh the statements that my experience contradicted. In this the writing differed from the other such musical journalism of the people who wrote *as though they had* the critic's equipment, which in reality they did not have—who, that is, knew and used the real critic's terminology, but, lacking his perception of what the terminology referred to, applied the terms to wrong objects or to no real objects at all. As it happened, Craft provided an amusing demonstration of this with his report on Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*, in which his demolition of Bernstein's pretensions as a composer demolished at the same time Harold Schönberg's pretensions as a critic. Quoting Schönberg's pronouncement that Bernstein's work "uses fashionable techniques," Craft commented:

> *But it doesn't. It uses very unfashionable ones . . . Only at the very beginning, which sounded like* Les Noces *as it might have been recomposed by Berio, did the music threaten to become fashionable . . . . In fact, the mystery of this score, as well as of Mr. Bernstein as a composer in general, is how he could be in the spotlight of musical life for so long and still register so little effect from developments since mid-Copland . . . . The truth is that . . . his creative resources are meager.*

And concerning the "orchestrations by Hershey Kay" that Schönberg included among the fashionable elements of Bernstein's *Mass* Craft said:

> *While Mr. Kay's techniques have postponed the extinction of many an incompetent composer, they could hardly be called fashionable, besides which, one wonders if he should be "credited" with those overworked timpani, woodblocks, bongos, xylophone-doublings-of-violins.*

The two books also differ from each other. Whereas Porter is a professional reviewer whom *The New Yorker* brought from London to provide its readers with the weekly reports and comments on musical events of the season of 1972-73 that are reprinted in his book, Craft is a musician, a conductor whose first concerts in the late '40s revealed gifts that impressed not only outsiders like myself but insiders like Stravinsky; who continued his conducting during the many years of his association with Stravinsky; and whose writing was something he began to do with Stravinsky in their books of conversations and then continued to do on his own. *Prejudices in Disguise* contains the reviews of some events of that 1972-73 season that Craft wrote for *World*, and in addition his occasional articles on other subjects for other publications. And the surprising thing is that although he limited his conducting almost entirely to the works of Stravinsky, Schönberg and Webern, his book contains only one article on Solti's concert performance in Chicago of Schönberg's *Erwartung* and another on his stage performance in Paris of Schönberg's *Moses and Aaron*. For Craft *Moses and Aaron* is "one of the handful of twentieth-century operas with contemporary musical and dramatic power" and "deserves precedence over the Delius and Britten, Henze and Ginastera operas that have been included in the recent repertories"; for me—and I am sure for the majority of the musical public—it communicates, like most of Schönberg's music, no expressive sense or mere internal coherence in the sounds that are unpleasant to the ear; and one is surprised as well as pleased by the large number of articles by Craft on music which that majority of the public is interested in—Bach's cantatas, Mozart's piano concertos, the music of Schubert, Chopin, Brahms, Mahler, Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini*, Glinka's operas, Wagner's *Ring* music-dramas. Porter, on the contrary, writes comparatively little about the music that interests most of his *New Yorker* readers, and a great deal about the music of today—by Boulez, Henze, Ginastera, Elliott Carter, George Crumb and dozens of others—which those readers probably find even more eccentric, outlandish, meaningless and unattractive to the ear than Schönberg's.

This represents Porter's agreement with Boulez about the necessity of making the music of our own time an integral part of our concert life; but his readers may not want that much of the music of our time in the concert hall and that much writing about it in *The New Yorker*. After a review of Porter's book which I concluded with the statement that one had to apply to him what Tovey said of Schubert, and say that the occasional inequalities of his performance did not make him a critic of less

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than the highest rank, a musician wrote in reply that even if Porter's perceptions were clear he was boring to read; and it may have been all the writing about the music of our time that bored this musician. But it may also have been something else. One reads on the jacket of the book that Porter's "erudite and beautifully crafted reviews . . . have often been compared with the music commentaries of George Bernard Shaw"; but I see no basis for this comparison. For one thing, Shaw is not erudite; and he provides a demonstration of the fact that the scholar's knowledge about a work and the critic's perception of it are different and don't necessarily occur together. Shaw is an example of a perceptive critic who is not a scholar; Porter is one of the exceedingly rare examples of a scholar who is also a perceptive critic. And occasionally, in Porter's writing, the two work well together: I cannot imagine anyone being bored by his discussion of details of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (though I can imagine others besides myself gritting their teeth at the incongruity, in its context, of the statement "Dido, like Sophie von Faninal, is good on pedigrees"), or anyone not being grateful for his enlightening discussion of the musical style of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, a work not part of the operatic repertory that musicians and the public are familiar with. But unfortunately Porter, like most scholars, is compulsively erudite, with no ability to judge what scholarly information is or is not worth a reader's attention. And so I can imagine my correspondent being bored by Porter's three pages about the sources of the libretto of *The Magic Flute*, or even infuriated by the lengthy discussion of Zandonai's unfamiliar opera *Francesca da Rimini*, whose music, it eventually turns out, has little dramatic effect or value in itself and makes the work not worth listening to or reading about.

As for style of writing, the striking difference between Shaw's and Porter's is precisely the appearance of high-spirited spontaneity in Shaw's as against the obvious studied crafting of Porter's that becomes tiresome. Moreover it isn't only the words that are crafted but the ideas; so that one gets things like this:

> *Ballet began when Terpsichore touched Apollo's finger, as on the Sistine ceiling God touches Adam's, and inspired a pas de deux in which movement became form and bodies learned to speak and sing—a pas de deux that whenever it is re-enacted holds implicit in its plastic images all dance, past, present, and future. This symbolic moment outside time, when Terpsichore joined her sisters Polyhymnia and Calliope on equal terms, was first shaped in mortal history on June 12, 1928, on the stage of the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt in Paris; in cold print it is recorded just before rehearsal-figure 64 of Stravinsky's score* Apollo Musagetes.

But this over-crafted idea about the Stravinsky-Balanchine *Apollo* is an inequality (to use Tovey's term) in the performance of the only critic who, looking at the courtiers' stately sarabande at the beginning of Act Two of Balanchine's *Don Quixote*, perceived "the cold, precise [dance] in which aristocratic formality suddenly takes on the accents of menace to suggest the Spain of Philip II." And I must therefore say again that Porter's occasional inequalities are those of a critic of the highest rank.

B. H. Haggin's most recent book is *Thirty Five Years of Music* (Horizon).

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J. Hillis Miller on Literary Criticism

A distinctive feature of English and American literary criticism in 1975 has been its naturalization of recent continental criticism. This is an obvious enough fact, but its full implications are perhaps not so easy to pin down. Another way to put this is to say that literary criticism at this moment is an international enterprise. Even if one is working on an entirely English or American topic, to ignore criticism in other countries is to risk being provincial. It is to risk repeating methodological developments already performed in France, in Germany or in Russia. The opposite is also of course the case, and it is refreshing to see the important French periodical, *Poetique*, giving occasional space to English and American criticism. Literay criticism in the West has always been a multilingual effort, for example in Coleridge's dependence on Kant and Schelling, or in William Empson's early use of Freud, or in Kenneth Burke's brilliant appropriation of Marx and Freud. In the high days of the New Criticism, however, or, more recently, when Northrop Frye commanded much of the scene in Anglo-American criticism, it was easier than it is now to think that one could ignore the blue fumes of Gauloises or the tinkling of Swiss cowbells.

An exploration of this turn in criticism would leave out a number of important books published in 1975. These continue indigenous approaches and are often implicitly hostile to continental criticism or indifferent to it. Helen Vendler in *The Poetry of George Herbert* (Harvard; $14)

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shows herself to be the most distinguished contemporary practitioner of the New Critical tradition of "close reading." The same tradition is continued in James Kincaid's *Tennyson's Major Poems* (Yale; $15), with its somewhat unexpected use of the terms "irony" and "comedy" to account for Tennyson. Hugh Kenner's *A Homemade World* (Knopf; $7.95) is *sui generis*, like all Kenner's criticism. It is a lively extended footnote or cadenza for *The Pound Era* (1971). *A Homemade World* is a description of the tradition which is antithetical to Pound's and Eliot's: the homemade, American tradition of Williams, Marianne Moore, Hemingway, Fitzgerald and Stevens, though Kenner hardly does justice to Stevens. Sacvan Bercovitch's *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (Yale; $15) stays within the continuity of history-of-ideas based American studies, the discipline which has Perry Miller and A.O. Lovejoy as father figures. Robert Penn Warren's Jefferson Lecture, *Democracy and Poetry* (Harvard; $5.95) is a moving meditation on the fate of the self in American culture and in American letters. Robert Alter's *Partial Magic: The Novel as a Self-Conscious Genre* (California; $10) traces, with elegance and perception, the tradition of the novel which reflects on itself. With the exception of a few references to Roland Barthes, Marthe Robert and Jean-Jacques Mayoux, Alter ignores for the most part the abundant French, German, Russian and Italian secondary literature on this topic. And, as some would say, who cares? Literary biographies, finally, like R.W.B. Lewis' distinguished *Edith Wharton* (Harper & Row; $15) or C. P. Snow's *Trollope* (Scribners; $14.95) while containing valuable insights into the works of these writers, assume on the whole that the work is a more or less straightforward reflection of the life or commentary on it.

Such work remains mostly innocent, whether innocently or not, of any continental tinge. It is still the case, however, that much of the most significant Anglo-American literary criticism of 1975 would have been impossible without the continental "influence." I use the word here etymologically, following Harold Bloom. Influence is an occult invasion, a flowing in, almost a disease, like influenza. What is meant here by "continental criticism," and how has it been "accommodated," "translated," "appropriated" (all the terms for this are figurative and ambiguous) into English and American? It is an oversimplification to say that the only influence has been French structuralism. There is still a vital borrowing from phenomenology or the "criticism of consciousness," as in Jay Fellows' admirable *The Failing Distance: The Autobiographical Impulse in John Ruskin* (John Hopkins; $10). This book is intelligently informed by the critical procedures of Georges Poulet and Gaston Bachelard. Modern Russian criticism continues to exert an influence, as is indicated by the publication this year of *Twentieth-Century Russian Literary Criticism*, a collection of representative Russian essays in translation edited by Victor Erlich (Yale; $15). The strength and applicability of Mikhail Bakhtin's criticism is beginning to be felt. (The translation by R. W. Rotsel of his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* [Ardis; $8.95] was published in 1973.) The work of the group centered at the new German university of Konstanz is becoming more widely known, with the translation of work by Hans Robert Jauss in the journal *New Literary History* and in the volume of essays from that journal, *New Directions in Literary History*, edited by Ralph Cohen (Johns Hopkins). Johns Hopkins also published in 1974 *The Implied Reader*, by Wolfgang Iser, another member of the Konstanz group. So-called structuralism, moreover, turns out when inspected closely to be riven into sects and schools and warring individualities, as is always the case with such movements. It divides into Marxists, Lacanians, Derridaians, Lévi-Straussians, Foucaultians, Barthesians, Jakobsonians and so on. These can by no means be reconciled to one another as a single homogeneous critical method. One important feature of "structuralism" is its reappropriation, reinterpretation or even "deconstruction" of the seminal masters of modern thought: Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Saussure. It makes a difference, obviously, whether one's father-text is Marx or Nietzsche or Freud.

Continental criticism, then, is sufficiently complex to be irreducible to a single paradigm. Moreover, it intervenes in many different ways in current English and American criticism. One way is by direct translation, as in the translations (the most important being of Derrida's essay on Lacan) in the valuable issue of *Yale French Studies*, no. 52, *Graphesis: Perspectives in Literature and Philosophy*, edited by Marie-Rose Logan. This issue is mostly a repertoire of essays in the current mode, essays by Jean-Francois Lyotard, Shosana Felman,

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Michel Serres, Paul de Man, and others, as well as the one by Derrida. Several new or newly oriented literary journals are in fact one conduit whereby continental criticism flows into America: *New Literary History, Diacritics, Critical Inquiry, MLN* and *The Georgia Review* under its new editor, John Irwin: it is significant that these contain the most lively literary criticism in any American periodicals today. Translations of books by Roland Barthes have been recently published, and we are promised translations from Genette's three volumes of *Figures* (Johns Hopkins), as well as of Derrida's *De la grammatologie*, with an excellent long introduction by Gayatri Spivak (Johns Hopkins). These will be major events for those who do not read French, as Walter Kaufmann's translations of Nietzsche have been essential to the current revival of interest in that writer in America. Many Americans, alas, if not many Englishmen, are still monolingual and so dependent on the accidents of translation.

Another way European criticism becomes present in the English-speaking world is by direct exposition, as in Jonathan Culler's well-informed and argumentative *Structuralist Poetics* (Cornell; $13.50). Another way is by overt application, for example in Joseph Riddel's Derrida and Heidegger-inspired book on Williams, *The Inverted Bell* (Louisiana; 1974), or in Herbert Schneidau's admirable forthcoming book on Biblical culture, *Sacred Discontent* (Louisiana, 1976), or in Culler's own essay in application, *Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty* (Cornell; $9.50), or in Jeffrey Mehlman's Lacanian *The Structural Study of Autobiography: Proust, Leiris, Sartre, Lévi-Strauss* (Cornell; $15, 1974), or in Edward Said's brilliant meditation on *Beginnings* (Basic Books; $15). The latter is one of the most successful overt appropriations in English of the new continental tradition.

In other books the presence of such critical methodologies is more covert. Gilles Deleuze's concept of repetition intervenes briefly in Avrom Fleishman's *Virginia Woolf* (Johns Hopkins; $10). John Hollander makes use of structural linguistics in his elegant, learned, and sensitive *Vision and Resonance: Two Senses of Poetic Form* (Oxford; $12.50), a book that could only have been written by someone himself a distinguished poet. There is a somewhat hidden use of Foucault in Ronald Paulson's splendid account of the development of "sign systems" in English art from Hogarth to Gainsborough *Emblem and Expression* (Harvard; $25 Thames and Hudson). Paulson's book is informed throughout by a literary sensitivity and by literary parallels, and so may be included here. An encounter with contemporary French criticism emerges somewhat unexpectedly as the most interesting part of Frank Kermode's *The Classic* (Viking; $7.95), though Kermode wishes to maintain, as against Barthes or Derrida, the notion of a persistence, in each literary text, of "a substance that prevails." James M. Redfield makes unostentatious use of structural anthropology in *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector* (Chicago; $13.50). John Irwin's decision to juxtapose Nietzsche and Freud with Faulkner in his lively and challenging *Doubling and Incest, Repetition and Revenge: A Speculative Reading of Faulkner* (Johns Hopkins; $8.95) shows that he too has caught the continental flu. Irwin's account in his introduction of how his book came to be written is a good example of how these influences occur. They seem more likely to happen these days in certain universities than in others: Johns Hopkins, Buffalo, Cornell, Iowa, Yale.

Finally, and most important in the criticism of 1975, are those critics who are themselves central forces in the new criticism, or who are developing a strongly individual criticism partly in deliberate antithesis to it. These would include Jacques Derrida, whose *Glas* (Galilée, 1974) has already established itself as a masterwork in the "deconstructive" mode. A new book of essays by Derrida and several of his French associates, *Mimesis* (Flammarion), has just been published. Paul de Man, one of the most rigorous and pervasively influential of present American critics, has published two important essays during the year, one on Nietzsche in the issue of *Yale French Studies* mentioned above, the other, on Rousseau, in the fall

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issue of *The Georgia Review*. Geoffrey Hartman's brilliant *The Fate of Reading* (Chicago; $15) is at crucial moments a dialogue with what he calls "the School of Derrida." Hartman has dealt at length with *Glas* in the most important English essay on Derrida since de Man's "The Rhetoric of Blindness" (which appeared in *Blindness and Insight* [Oxford; $6.95, 1971]). Hartman's essay is "Monsieur Texte: On Jacques Derrida, his *Glas*," *The Georgia Review* (Winter). From his first book, *The Unmediated Vision*, to his current work, Hartman has been one of those writing in English who has been most aware of the international scope of the enterprise of criticism, and one of those able to enact most subtly in his writing the drama of reading, criticism being, as has been said, an "allegory" or putting otherwise of the act of reading.

Harold Bloom has published three books in this year, each adding to the evidence that he is perhaps the most dazzlingly creative and provocative of critics writing in English today: *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford; $8.95), *Kabbalah and Criticism* (Seabury; $6.95), and *Poetry and Repression* (Yale; $11.95). In these books de Man and Derrida, "the School of Deconstruction," are the dark shadows Bloom would exorcise, but they are also the antithetical doubles he needs for his own formulations, temptations of the abyss he would fill or show to have a bottom. All three of these books, like their precursor, *The Anxiety of Influence* (Oxford; $2.50 paper, 1973), and like Geoffrey Hartman's *The Fate of Reading*, have great, if controversial, importance in the *mise en scène* of contemporary criticism. They must be understood, however, in order to be persuasively controverted. Bloom's *Poetry and Repression* will have the advantage, from this point of view, of being a full-scale "practical" application of the theories worked out in the earlier books to readings of the range of modern poets from Blake, Wordsworth, and Shelley through Browning and Tennyson on down to Yeats and Stevens. Bloom is attempting in these books to appropriate the renewed understanding of rhetorical, that is, figurative, basis of literature. This means, for Bloom, going back through the rhetorical insights of the Kabbalah to those of classical rhetoric. At the same time Bloom wants to preserve the priority of the psyche over language, the priority of the living voice over writing. This is a neat trick if you can do it, and more power to him, since it is a question of power, of the energy which creates and sustains fictions, including even the "bedrock" fiction of the self. That fiction, in Bloom's view, forms and reforms itself as a solid-seeming base, even when it is most put in question.

The exuberant word play of Geoffrey Hartman, on the other hand, is no play, but serious game. It is part of Hartman's developing interrogation of the word. The continuity of this questioning may be followed, for example, by setting Hartman's newest essay on Valéry in *The Fate of Reading* against the essay on Valéry in *The Unmediated Vison* or the crucial use of Valéry in the essay on Virginia Woolf in *Beyond Formalism*. Hartman's work has always been concerned not only with the fate of reading but also with the fate of poetry, which is to some degree the same thing. This has meant a concern with literary history. The somewhat covert center of Hartman's recent work has been a vision of the development of post-enlightenment poetry which wants to keep open the way to the ground of this poetry (the word!), while conducting a somewhat circumspect testing of that ground.

Hartman, Bloom and de Man are members, in fact, of a new group of critics centered at Yale. These critics are by no means unified in their methodological commitments. They share questions rather than answers, but draw strength, often by opposition, from one another's example. To this group may be added Jacques Derrida, who now presents a seminar at Yale in the early fall of each year. The fundamental issue at stake among the members of this group is the question whether the "cure of the ground" which Stevens demands of poetry and of discourse about poetry is to be a "grounding," a making solid of the foundation, as one "cures" a fiberglass hull, or whether the ground is to be cured by being effaced, made to vanish, as medicine cures a man of disease by taking it away. As Stevens says, the rock is air, "nothingness," "the dominant blank, the unapproachable." Is a "cure of the ground" the clearing away of the ground, leaving nothing to stand on, or is it a securing of the ground, making it firm, so one can build on it? Space limitations forbid exploring this difference now. It must suffice here to say that the difference generates the inner drama or *polemos* of contemporary criticism, for example that among the members of the Yale group.

J. Hillis Miller is professor of English at Yale. His most recent book is *Aspects of Narrative* (Columbia University Press).

Books Considered

Look How the Fish Live by J.F. Powers

(Knopf; $6.95)

Perhaps when the roll is called up yonder, J.F. Powers' name will assume its rightful place in the ranks of contemporary American writers, but as matters currently stand he is an author curiously without honor in his own country. This undeserved obscurity is all the more peculiar when one considers that his only novel, *Morte D'Urban*, received the National Book Award and he himself has been both a Guggenheim and a Rockefeller fellow. It is tempting, not to say convenient, to lay the blame squarely on the fact that his literary output has moved at a slow and stately pace bordering on the glacial—unlike, say, Joyce Carol Oates, he is not given to whacking out his pieces like so many bars of pig iron to be dumped on the market as soon as the words have cooled. I think, however, that the real reason lies elswhere, in a more somber quarter: *i.e.*, that J.F. Powers is not a name to conjur with precisely because he is one of the most accomplished practitioners of the short story still alive and writing in America today.

Whatever the reasons (and they are many), mastery of the short story constitutes one of the swiftest and surest roads to creative invisibility that this country has ever devised. To take a case in point, if the Viking Press hadn't taken the gamble of republishing Grace Paley's masterful *Little Disturbances of Man* (thus sparking an animated debate on just *why* nobody had ever heard of Grace Paley, that superb writer would still be languishing in the outer darkness, one more face in the anti-war movement, one more strident Bronx voice at a hundred near-forgotten rallies. True, books of short stories do not sell well, and the publishers have the figures to prove it. True, too, that the mass-circulation magazine market of 20 years ago has shrunk to a mere remnant, with stories serving as a sort of typescript frame around a Koren drawing in the *New Yorker*, a boost to Hugh Hefner's ego in *Playboy*, a convenient alibi to keep *Penthouse* and its ilk out of the law courts, with *Esquire*, the *Atlan-*

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tic, and *Harper's* in their own ever-threatened bailiwicks. And as for the so-called little magazines, they seem, as always, to command an audience consisting largely of their editors, their editors' families, and their contributors; like Bishop Barkley's tree in the quad, they go mostly unobserved save by God. On the increasingly rare occasions when a good collection finally does manage to struggle its way into print, the critics invariably do their best by it—as, indeed, I am about to do. I don't know how the ensuing public silence makes my colleagues feel, but in my own case it produces a feeling not unlike that of shouting into a closet.

Hope, however, has a pawky way of springing eternal, and here goes yet another attempt to delay a fine collection of short stories in its fateful journey from the presses to the remainder table. It is a book not without its flaws—or, rather, one large flaw, in that five of the ten stories are little more than landfill, evidently stuck in to pad the volume out to what its publishers consider adequate length. The best of the lot, the title story, is not without its merits and it possesses a shapely form, but it is too mannered an undertaking, too self-consciously, a "story," and its subject—sensitive soul confronts parking lot America, final score: Parking Lots 10, Sensitive Soul 0—is more than a little twice-told. Of the others, "Folks" is worth a smile, and the remaining three range from the minor ("Tinkers") to the trivial ("Moonshot"). It is the other five stories that constitute the real book, and they are pure, unalloyed gold.

Centering on a midwestern priest named Joe, his young curate Bill, Bill's modernist fellow-seminarians, and the aging bishop of the Minnesota diocese of Ostergothenburg, they deal with Powers' unique milieu, the Roman Catholic Church in late 20th century America. It is a church where the articles of faith have been reduced to an excuse for an institutionalized Kiwanian hierarchy and are at the best the subject for sophomoric debate, where efficient administration and good PR have taken precedence over the nurture of souls and good housekeeping at the rectory is more important than the pastoral round. In "One of Them" there appears an elderly priest who (or so I believe) embodies everything that God has been reduced to in this glibly amateurish, go-get-'em environment: an untidy recluse who delivers splendid sermons, plies his curate with inspirational pamphlets, talks in monosyllables, and addresses envelopes for an insurance company in his spare time. His hobby is wildlife preservation.

To say that these stories are beautifully conceived and artfully executed is like saying that an elephant has big ears; on his chosen ground, Powers has no competitors worthy of the name, John Updike not excepted. It seems almost gratuitous to add that, in the service of his larger and intensely serious purpose, he is also marvelously funny. Anyone who fails to laugh aloud at the ridiculous revelation (in "Farewell," my personal favorite) that is the closest the diocese of Ostergothenburg can come to a miracle must have a heart of stone. It is when one realizes why one is laughing that the lesson begins.

L.J. Davis

L.J. Davis' most recent novel is *Walking Small* (Braziller).

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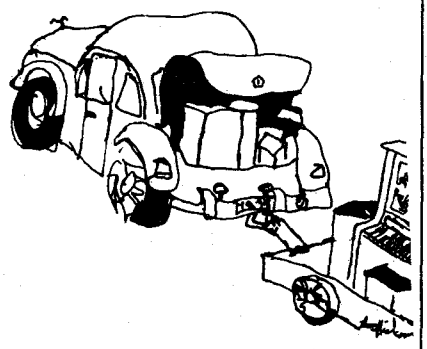

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by Joyce Cary

(St. Martin's; $8.95)

In the literary market place, Joyce Cary's stock has fallen in the past several years. Few Americans read him; he isn't taught much in the universities (literature students have rarely heard of him); critics mostly ignore him. Only two of his novels are currently available in American editions (*The Horse's Mouth* and *Mister Johnson*), and I suspect that the latter has remained available not because it is one of Cary's finest works but, rather, because its African setting has guaranteed a certain appeal to people involved in Black Studies programs. (His following is much stronger in England, where I suspect his outrageous characters are still idealized for their attack on tradition.)

Cary's early novels were influenced by the years he spent in Africa (1914-1919), working for the British colonial service in Nigeria and the Cameroons. From these experiences he gathered the raw materials for his four "African" novels: *Aissa Saved* (1932), *An American Visitor* (1932), *The African Witch* (1936), and *Mister Johnson* (1939), the finest of the group. It was also during his African years that Cary began working so diligently to get his work into print, often writing several thousand words a day. Lesser writers would have given up in despair. At one time Cary had no less than 29 novels in his house in various stages of completion, though his first published novel (*Aissa Saved*) did not appear until Africa was well behind him and he was 44 years old.

One of Cary's unpublished African novels, *Cock Jarvis*, has recently been edited by A. G. Bishop. Cary worked on this novel from 1924 to 1937, ultimately writing half a million words (of which 2000 manuscript pages remain) in at least 13 versions. Although authors are often done a disservice by having their early work edited and published (and in this specific case, I question who will benefit), having *Cock Jarvis* before us in some sort of readable form is a pleasant enough experience. The antecedents of much of Cary's later work are evident here. In the foreword, Walter Allen refers to it as "the fountainhead of all that followed." Certainly this is true in regard to the typical Cary hero: brash, unwilling and incapable of conforming to whatever is expected by the Establishment; part buffoon, part rogue. As a character, then, Cock Jarvis

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is a precursor of Mister Johnson or Gulley Jimson (of *The Horse's Mouth*), embodying many of their most vital qualities.

Like so many of Cary's novels, *Cock Jarvis* is relatively plotless—picaresque. Early in the published version, we learn that Jarvis became a popular hero in 1902 by extending the British empire, after storming the capital of the Emir of Daji. All of this would have been fine, except that the maneuver was not authorized by the British government, which since that time hasn't known what to do with him. Jarvis now in his late 40s or early 50s (there are inconsistencies in the manuscript) lives by his dubious glory, joining the Political Department in the newly acquired Daji region, in Northern Nigeria, annoyed that he never received official recognition for his heroic efforts. As the story begins, he is in London courting a 19-year-old girl whom he marries and takes back to Daji. What becomes the novel's major conflict is his wife's liaison with a younger man, named Thompson, whom Jarvis helps to join the Political Department and come to Daji. Eventually Jarvis' wife leaves him for Thompson.

This is a rather thin plot by any measure. Nevertheless there are a number of elements here for which Cary later became quite famous, such as the numerous scenes satirizing the British colonial machine in Africa. Often I had the feeling I was not reading a novel but a fascinating account of Cary's own career in the foreign service and the odd ducks he met, done up in the third person. The humor is cutting yet delicious—Cary creates a world we rarely see recorded so minutely or so humorously in the works of later expatriates who used an African setting. Although Cock Jarvis is basically a one-character novel, there are a number of marvellous minor figures—the Africans and the eccentrics who joined the British colonial service, including their mismatched wives.

Jarvis himself has a remarkable buoyancy. No matter what foolish escapade he becomes involved in, he always comes out on top. His non-conformity lets him get away with murder; nothing bothers him for very long. Like Mister Johnson (Jarvis with a darker skin), Cocky lives in the present. All his emotions are immediate, short lived. The world is only as large as he can stretch it at any given moment. It is easy to understand why his wife leaves him.

In the character of Cock Jarvis we can identify the reasons for Cary's current wane in popularity as well as his most durable quality. In "serious" literature today, we expect our characters to be more psychological; we want to get inside their minds. Joyce Cary's heroes, by contrast, ask little of us other than that we appreciate them. They have learned how to enjoy life—something most of the rest of us have forgotten. They illustrate that no panic button is necessary for the man who generates his own vitality. Though far from being a completed novel, *Cock Jarvis* is about as good a place as any to begin enjoying the shenanigans of Cary's misfits.

Charles R. Larson

Charles R. Larson is the author of *The Emergence of African Fiction* (Indiana University Press).

The Dead Father by Donald Barthelme

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $7.95)

Of all the critics who've wondered at the success of Donald Barthelme's unique fiction, friend and colleague Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., has offered the best explanation for it. "No other art besides fiction," Vonnegut says, "requires the audience to be the performer. You have to count on the reader's being a good performer and you may write material which he absolutely can't perform, in which case it's a bust." The short stories with which Barthelme is so closely identified are indeed hard scores to master. But doing so, Vonnegut continues, "is a learning process, and *The New Yorker* has been a very good institution of that sort; they have a captive audience and they come out every week and people finally catch on to Barthelme, for instance, and are able to perform that sort of thing in their heads and enjoy it."

Over the past 10 years Barthelme and his readers have been getting better and better. So have his sales. His first collection, *Come Back, Dr. Caligari* (1964), didn't reach many readers, and copies of it are virtually unobtainable today, except at the collector's price of $50. The next, *Unspeakable Practices, Unnatural Acts* (1968), benefitted from paperback distribution, and by 1970 a volume like *City Life* could make the *New York Times'* list of the year's 12 best.

But then the controversy set in. Barthelme's fragmentary forms were attacked as amoral abberations. Joyce Carol Oates charged that Barthelme's posture as the passive, drifting, witty punster would damn us all when life might come to imitate art, with no real man in command at the literary helm. Pearl Kazin Bell insisted Barthelme was even worse, a celebrant of "unreason and inexorable decay," certainly a corrupting influence on younger readers. If people were indeed learning how to read him, Barthelme was contributing to their delinquency.

All this clamor, one notes with some amazement, was directed at Barthelme solely for his fragmentary style. Unlike the victims of earlier outcries—Burroughs, Henry Miller, even as far back as D. H. Lawrence—Barthelme put little objectionable content in his stories. That was the problem: the stories were sometimes devoid of any recognizable content at all, and the idea that legions of new readers were spending time *just reading* was too much for certain spokesmen to bear.

"He sentences us to the sentence"—this apparently is what the older critics cannot bear. But what do Barthelme's sentences read like? From "A Manual for Sons," the inset guidebook of *The Dead Father*, we learn such things as "Dun-colored fathers tend to shy at obstacles, and therefore you do not want a father of this color, because life, in one sense, is nothing but obstacles, and his continual shying will reduce your nerves to grease. The liver chestnut-colored father has a reputation for decency and good sense; if God commands him to take out his knife and slice through your neck with it, he will probably say, 'No, thanks.' The dusty-chestnut father will reach for his knife. The light-chestnut father will look the other way, to the east, where another ceremony, with more interesting dances, is being held." The content is nearly nonsensical, just as the "realtime, online, computer-controlled wish evaporation" is in another Barthelme story. But the author is not, as has been charged, making junk sculpture from the detritus of our worthless lives. There are such serious machines as computers (one has just set this line of type), and wishes *have* survived the modern world. When Barthelme does use junk, it turns out to be with high moral purpose. His first novel, *Snow White* (1967), reads as a linguistic indictment of the LBJ years. The president in that story conducts a ruthless "War on Poetry"; the Rapunzel-like heroine languishes in her tower

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because the heroes "have failed to respond to her hair initiative"; the world is filled with *dreck*, but its source is language—"Oh I wish there were some words in the world," Snow White laments, "that were not the words I always hear!"

In order to tell a story, Barthelme must reinvent a language with which to bear it, and then perform a resuscitation act upon his readers so that the new words carry through. It's easy for attention to wander when bombarded by a list of things computers can do; Barthelme throws in the craziness of "wish evaporation" to shake us back to our senses. His so-called fragmentary forms do the same job. There's an energy which comes from rapid changes of context, the mixing of comic scenes, and the fracturing of linguistic modes. It's the basic method which has made cinema the prime attention-getting medium of our times: montage, quick cut, a whole repertoire of techniques which work as well for tragedy as for comedy—which have, indeed, become the tempo of our modern lives.

Barthelme's new work, *The Dead Father*, is being hailed as an appropriate occasion for a review of his career. In terms of the critics, it answers objections that Barthelme cannot write a sustained novel. Its subject is coherent and continuous, and of some pertinence to the author's own life (like Vonnegut, Barthelme is a "Jr." and an architect's son as well). On its own, *The Dead Father* could very well become the classic in a new field, Dad Lit. Writers from Turgenev to Herbert Gold have written about the power of fathers, how they run amok through the psychic lives of their sons. But it's Donald Barthelme—with his self-effacing sentences and Woody Allen posture toward the world—who may have found the best way to talk about it. His character the dead father dominates the landscape, eyes staring into the sky, jawline like a rock formation, smiling slightly, a bit of mackerel salad lodged between his teeth. "We think it's mackerel salad," says Barthelme. "It appears to be mackerel salad. In the sagas, it is mackerel salad."

As with Barthelme's earlier work, the funniest and most effective things in *The Dead Father* are accomplished by language, by the writing itself. The old man has the best lines by far, delivering a speech which reads like a 10-year-old's transliteration of Church Latin, or giving an old fashioned "tongue lashing" which comes down like a curse from a good translation of the Old Testament. Best of all, he talks like everyone's father: "Hey son. Hey boy. Let's you and me go out and throw the ball around. Throw the ball around. You don't want to go out and throw the ball around? . . . Well let's see, you don't want to go out and throw the ball around, you can help me work on the patio. You want to help me work on the patio? Sure you do. Sure you do . . . C'mon kid, I'll let you hold the level. And this time I want you to hold the fucking thing straight. I want you to hold it straight. It ain't difficult, any idiot can do it." No son can ever hold a level straight for his father. Nor can he find the pencil, the t-square, the hammer or the nails. No son can ever do anything right. The true voice of his father tells him this.

One way or another, the father keeps repeating this to everyone as Barthelme's novel continues. It's the only thing that really happens in the book. The situation is one of Barthelme's unique reconstructions of Beckett: two spokesmen and a squad of helpers are hauling the mammoth carcass of the dead father across an alien land to his bulldozed burial place. The father is only figuratively dead; he keeps reminding his army of sons about how it is, that "a son can never, in the fullest sense, become a father. Some amount of amateur effort is possible. A son may after honest endeavor produce what some people might call, technically, children. But he remains a son. In the fullest sense." The dead father occasionally "slips his cable" and is the butt of some jokes himself ("Stumbling from the stage is anathema to them," said Julie, "they want to be nuzzling new women when they are ninety"), but his purpose is the inexorable reminder that he *has been*, something which the sons will never escape.

The best part of *The Dead Father* is the booklet, "A Manual for Sons," the only section of Barthelme's novel previously published. It is characteristic of the author's stronger style, and shows that he needn't conventionalize plot and character in order to write a true novel. In the manual, fathers are listed by voice, color and general habit. It tells us everything we need to know, since the rest of the book is largely the hauling. Like the best of Barthelme's work, it uses old words in a new way to tell us things we may have lost in our modern lives. The "Manual," in fact, is essential reading, for sons of course, but also for the father who wonders what he's wrought. The son, he may be told, "is mad about being helpless when you were powerful, but no, not that either, he is mad about being contingent when you were necessary, not quite it, he is insane because when he loved you, you didn't notice."

Jerome Klinkowitz

Jerome Klinkowitz is associate professor of English at the University of Northern Iowa.

Unto Death by Amos Oz

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $6.95)

Amos Oz is an extraordinarily gifted Israeli novelist who delights his readers with both verbal brilliance and the depiction of eternal struggles—between flesh and spirit, fantasy and reality, Jew and Gentile. Oz has tried his hand at various types of fiction: psychological realism in *My Michael*, social documentation in *Elsewhere, Perhaps*, historical narrative in "Crusade," one of two novellas making up the present volume: but his carefully reconstructed worlds are invariably transformed into symbolic landscapes, vast arenas where primeval forces clash. Oz's is a generous, magic realism; in his tales concrete things are forever on the verge of shedding their physicality, and abstractions yearn for palpable form.

"Crusade," a haunting study of evil, shows how loathsome and maddeningly tentative the real world appears when seen in the distorting mirrors of perverted spirituality. En route to a mythical Jerusalem, a group of crusaders led by Count Guillaume of Touron sense the presence of a "hidden Jew" in their midst who is held responsible for the vicissitudes of the journey. Encounters with actual Jews on the road serve only to heighten their anxiety, for they realize that mere physical annihilation is no antidote to terror. A pathetic little peddler is struck down with a vengeance too sweet to last. The leader of a Jewish community who asks the count to spare a houseful of rare Hebrew books in return for gold is killed "slowly, patiently." But as the chronicler of the expedition, a strange young man named Claude Crookback notes in the beginning of his journal, "it is in the nature of these Jews to burn only once." In their

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helpless rage the crusaders turn on each other and in time become a disheveled band of ruffians. Yet they continue to believe in their mission. "Earth, men, snow, suffering, death, all of these are but an allegory of the Kingdom of Heaven, toward which I am making my way," writes Claude in his chronicle. Even when it's all over and most of the crusaders, including the count, meet violent deaths, a handful of survivors push on toward Jerusalem "which is not a place but disembodied love." The transfigured crusaders are freed of their obsession. It seems they learned at last that Jew was but a name they gave to their own pains and nightmares.

Oz's novella is at once a remarkably successful evocation of a historical period and a powerful allegory, one in which naturalist details become natural symbols. An abandoned monastery taken over by the crusaders is not only a very real and spooky place with "myriad low cells and warrens of winding passages, spiral staircases, recesses, doorways, underground vaults lost in darkness"—it is also a representation of the occupants' confusion and despair. The grotesque realism of the narrative, as well as its tortured spirituality, is further enhanced by the highly imaginative use of language. Though it's conceivable that the original text is even richer, Nicholas de Lange's translation has a resonance and verve of its own.

The companion piece to "Crusade," "Late Love," is gloomy without medieval trappings. Here it is a Jew, an aging Israeli "cultural worker," who labors under an obsession, tirelessly warning his countrymen about the Bolshevik menace. Shraga Unger is himself a Russian-born Socialist who could never forgive the Soviets for also being Russians, that is, secretive, brutal and above all anti-Semitic. In his old age Shraga's Russophobia becomes more acute than ever—he even takes the long-repudiated, paranoid lies of the Kremlin at face value, alluding in his rambling, tragicomic monologue to "that handful of heroic doctors, Jews like ourselves, who risked their very lives to poison the archmurderer Stalin . . . " Like other European-born Israelis in Oz's fiction, Shraga can't tear himself away from his native country and feels increasingly out of place in the fast-moving, pragmatic Israel of the '70s. Looking around in Tel Aviv, a city built on sand, he is struck by the fragility and impermanence of it all. "One heavy Russian winter snowstorm, I say, could wipe Tel Aviv completely off the face of the earth." Shraga is not only obsessed with a secret Bolshevik plan to take over Israel, he is forever holding forth on the peculiarities of the Russian soul. Like a Jewish Dostoevsky he sees "savagery and sorrow . . . throughout the length and breadth of Russia," and Jews who are persecuted "viciously . . . but not without compassion."

What makes both of these novellas so compelling is that the author fully understands his fanatics' paltry delusions and insecurities, and makes us realize that what all these people are really after is peace of mind. A book entitled *The History of Israeli Tank Warfare* sparks a triumphant vision of Jewish retribution in Shraga's mind. But then he takes a second, sobering look at the pictures and says: "Tanks. Na! Such clumsy machines." What this tired old man would really like to do is move the Jews of the world to another planet where "in the depths of the silent expanse, beyond the reach of any power, we may rebuild a kind of heavenly Jerusalem."

Ivan Sanders

Ivan Sanders contributes to *Books Abroad.*

Terms of Endearment by Larry McMurtry

(Simon and Schuster; $9.95)

Sometimes, when the air is especially clear, everyday scenes take on a vividness that is more than real. Larry McMurtry's new novel is like that. It is a meticulous re-creation of 14 years in the life of an American family. It is not, however, either a family saga or an exercise in literary sociology. It has less than *The Last Picture Show* to say about change in modern life, but more about basic values that keep us going.

Aurora Greenway is a widow in her late 40s when the novel begins. She comes from Boston. After an uneventful marriage to a Charleston aristocrat whose only practical achievement in life was a minor but lucrative chemical patent, she has settled into a large, comfortable house in Houston, where she maintains a salon for a group of aging and lugubrious suitors. Alfredo, once a promising tenor and Aurora's lover, has been reduced to selling musical instruments. Gen. Scott is a retired tank commander who jealously

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monitors Aurora's comings and goings through field glasses from his house down the street. Vernon Dalhart, an oil millionaire, divides his affections about equally between Aurora and his automobile, which is equipped with bar, refrigerator, television, telephone and reclining seats. The reclining seats are essential since Vernon normally sleeps in the car on top of a high-rise parking garage which he owns in downtown Houston. Although Aurora has decided not to remarry, she needs her suitors for reassurance. In return, she provides affection and a dash of excitement in their otherwise dreary lives.

Her chief interest is her daughter Emma. She has raised Emma in the Greenway tradition, which includes being strong enough to accept disappointments. This is fortunate because Emma has a great many disappointments to accept. Her husband, ignominiously nicknamed "Flap," is an English professor with neither talent nor the capacity to appreciate his wife. Three scholarly articles and assorted seductions of undergraduates sum up his career. Eventually he drifts into the chairmanship of a small English department in Nebraska and a permanent arrangement with a neurotic dance teacher.

When Emma announces that she is pregnant, Aurora is deeply offended. She does not want to admit that she is old enough to be a grandmother. The first section of the novel traces Aurora's intricate, often comic maneuvers to avoid facing up to the inevitable. The result is a vivid, richly detailed portrait of a remarkably human woman fighting a losing battle against time. After Emma's child is born Aurora finally confronts—and accepts—her loss. She does so while looking at a small Renoir, a gift from her mother, which she keeps in her bedroom:

She took the hairbrush and stood for a while in front of her Renoir, brushing and looking at the gay young women in their yellow hats. . . . Then the young women blurred and the painting became like an open window, the window of memory, and Aurora looked through it and saw her own happiness with her mother in Paris, with Trevor on his boat, with Rudyard beneath the mosses of Charleston. It seemed to her that it had mostly been all happiness then, before quite so much had been said and done.

The second section turns to Emma. She bears two more children, a son and a daughter, Melanie, who inherits the special vitality and charm of her grandmother. Having given Flap up as hopeless, Emma drifts into a series of affairs with men almost as ineffectual as her mother's suitors. On Melanie's third birthday she learns that she has cancer. Being a true Greenway, she dutifully makes her peace with Flap, Aurora and her children. Then she concentrates on the process of dying. The Renoir has been hung in her hospital room. For Emma, too, it is a reminder of happiness—in her case, of a happiness which she associates with her mother but has never experienced:

In time, as Emma faded, her mother became lost in the Renoir. Often Emma couldn't tell whether there were two shimmery women in the room or three . . . . Sometimes she was living in the picture, walking in Paris in a pretty hat. At times she felt herself awakening in it instead of in a bed covered with hair that had fallen out at night.

Such is the chronicle of small failures and smaller triumphs that makes up *Terms of Endearment*. In one sense it is a novel about time—about the disorder that seeps into human relationships, the progressive closing off of possibilities, the erosion of hope, the loss of illusions about ourselves and those we love, or try to love. It is also, however, a novel about the way that women cope with loss. The response of Dylan Thomas to the death of his father was violent: "Rage, rage against the dying of the light." Women can be violent, but the response of Aurora and Emma is quieter and probably more typical. They have the strength to accept repeated loss, a powerful will to create order even when the effort seems futile, and the instinctive urge (which they often resent) to give love wherever it is accepted. If these qualities are reminiscent of Virginia Woolf's heroines, it should be added that McMurtry's women also have the grace to demolish sentimentality with irony.

The epigraph of *Terms of Endearment* is from Shakespeare:

Thou art thy mother's glass and she in thee
Calls back the lovely Aprill of her prime.

One defense against time is the transmission of essential values from generation to generation. Here the line of transmission is through women—from Aurora to Emma to Melanie. The women create continuity; the men are weak, vacillating and dependent.

Can a male write this kind of book? Is McMurtry's image stereotyped? Sentimental? Unconsciously sexist? In the absence of an authoritative directive from *Ms.* magazine the answer is no. *Terms of Endearment* is an entirely convincing appraisal of the way that women keep life going in spite of the odds. It is like those exceptionally clear days when everyday reality becomes art. It is not Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, but it is definitely a small and very adroit Renoir.

O. B. Hardison, Jr.

O. B. Hardison, Jr. is director of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

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Beyond the Bedroom Wall by Larry Woiwode

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $12.50)

"Every night when I'm not able to sleep, when scrolls of words and formulas unfurl in my mind and faces of those I love, both living and dead, rise from the dark, accusing me of apathy, ambition, self-indulgence, neglect—all of their accusations just—and there's no hope of rest, I try again to retrace the street." So begins *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*, and the paraphrase of Proust seems intentional and correct. For Larry Woiwode's second novel (his first, *What I'm Going To Do I Think*, won the William Faulkner Award for the best first novel of 1969) is a search for lost time, a book of remembrance, where desire, sleep, memory and death intertwine. It is a long family chronicle, running to some 600 pages, that begins in the '30s, continues to the present and is set primarily in North Dakota and Illinois. The Neumiller family, Martin, his wife Alpha and their five children, Jerome, Charles, Tim, Marie and Susan are at its center; but the narrative stretches back to include the death and burial of Martin's grandfather and moves forward to tell of the coming of maturity and marriage to the Neumiller children.

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The novel's title reflects Proust's influence, mixing the wonder and fear of childhood with a dreamlike hint of the sexual jealousy Freud found basic to family life. (The Maurice Sendak drawing on the dust jacket is both beautiful and functional.) The North Dakota and Illinois of this work are like the terrain of dreams, a wide, continuous plain that seems forever cold or on the edge of winter. And for anyone who has lived there, this is the "reality" of the Middle West; one's life there is always remembered against a succession of gray skies whose clouds may break at any moment to reveal a deep blue as endless as the flat land.

But the similarity to Proust ends at this level. Woiwode does not try to duplicate Proust's grand "symphonic" design; his story is told from many points of view in an unembellished prose. Each of his major characters is given at least one chapter to narrate or oversee. And yet Woiwode's intention is far from, say, the cubist approach of Faulkner in *As I Lay Dying*. In fact, on the technical level, *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* is not particularly adventurous. Nor does it pretend to be. Woiwode does not jump about in time; he moves forward, from one year to the next in chronological order, from one major event to another, leaning heavily on ellipsis but keeping to a basically linear progression. Woiwode is more interested in the process of memory, in uncovering its depths and mysteries; and he gives his narrative a smooth, dreamlike flow by repeating a set of images and events and having his various characters respond to them, each in his particular way.

The first of these images is sleep. The book begins and ends with references to it, providing a frame for the narrative. To sleep and then awaken is to move from an illusion to reality, a distinction in Woiwode's province of memory that is, at best, tenuous. Revelation begins at the edge of consciousness and dreams are the connective tissue of memory. Many of the characters, roused from sleep, see the faces of dead relatives at bedroom windows, and the visitations force them to make decisions.

And then there is death itself. *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* tells a sad, sad story that is imbued with death. Its first chapter is entitled "Burial" and its almost mythic portrayal sets the tone for all to come. The book's central experience is the death of Alpha, an event of such tragic weight (both for the characters and the structure of the book as a whole) that Woiwode divides it between two chapters, not to prolong but to banish the pain, to objectify and cleanse the past of its most tragic moments.

It is difficult in such short space to convey the scope of this novel. In his recent monograph on Proust, Roger Shattuck calls *In Search of Lost Time* "salvation by memory." The phrase seems to be true of *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* as well. And like Proust's great work, Woiwode's novel should not be read quickly but rather in long slow draughts that will not blur its beauty and power.

Robert Leiter

Robert Leiter is a free-lance writer and critic living in Philadelphia.

The Back of the Book

Things in Place
by Jerry Bumpus

(Fiction Collective; $8.95, $3.95 paper)

Jerry Bumpus has an eye for freaks, a useless gift if that is all one has. But Bumpus also sees the freak as enemy, at war with a better if distant world, of which it is the variant. His subject is the impersonality of passion. His place is American space, mainly the modern Southwest and Midwest: highways, motels, diners, used car lots, golf courses, cabins in the woods. There he unleashes his monsters, watching them settle the territory.

Things in Place, the cover title for these 13 stories, suggests a special order of the universe, an inherent satisfaction with that order, and a world where there are things in place of feelings. It also suggests that things in place are what we pay least attention to, such as waitresses, salesmen, recluses, or the widow in "Lament to Wolves" who has been waiting in place all these years for the return of Loren from Vietnam. She does not let on if she knows that before he went to war Loren had raped her daughter, his sister, and on the same day had murdered her husband, his father—had chopped him with two axes. Nor does she indicate knowing that Loren is home to take his sister again.

In "The Heart of Lovingkind" Ernie Seervus had been selling used cars for over 40 years until he married the rich Pearl Fish, and they moved to her country estate: "She sat on a wooden bench, and on the table before her she had spread the fistful of flowers she had stolen from the garden and which she was now slowly eating while she stared off across the distance." This is not Pearl, but Gigi, Pearl's kangaroo. Ernie wants to train Gigi, so he says. He would like the two of them—without Pearl—to take tea together, just as his Uncle Bob used to take tea with his kangaroo, Edith, before Bob went on a training spree and the animal, near exhaustion, stomped him to death. For Ernie Gigi is the moon, the body of melancholy. He can teach her to box and ride a bike, but not to love him.

Crazy it is, but not impossible. Bumpus makes us believe the things of his world by stating them outright—the Hobart Stull All-Purpose Frog Lock, for example: "I called it that not because it locked frogs, but because if my invention shared a resemblance with anything under the sun it was with the frog, and though it wasn't truly all-purpose (it could lock only filing cabinets with 100 percent efficiency, but it also locked rather snugly certain models of the Gossman refrigerator, a brand being made at that time in El Paso), there was something intriguing about the name" ("Selling"). Then there are the names of his characters: Miss Smight, Earline Griggs, Jasper Satin (of Wichita Falls, Texas), Owen Wiggler (of Duquoin, Illinois), Keg Jamaket, Professor Czoc (a she), Chuff Freyne, Mr. Moluska, Nadine Grun, and an art instructor named D.H. Lawrence. Bumpus' own name is no less remarkable.

These names sound either like machine parts or animals, and the people behave as a little of each. Mr. Moluska ("Patsy O'Day in the World"), who takes sex for rent, is as hard as an oyster, regular as clock work, and proud of his

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parts. Loren is half animal, but so is his sister, who still wants him. The old blind man in "Away in the Night" is encircled by wolves. Buck O'Brien, Professor Czoc's stud, had features "solidified to perpetual bovine woe." And real animals are ever near: "at the far end of the field the ball was being trundled off into the woods by a squat, dark creature, perhaps a badger."

Animals long for people, people for them; nature seems at once petrified and out of whack. The lead story "Things in Place" (called "Desert Matinee" in *The Best Short Stories of 1975* [Houghton Mifflin; $10]) has Haskel the recluse seeing giant insects in the road. The insects are "the motorcycle people," he tells his dog, who swarm, buzz and dismember one of their own. Bumpus' landscape is alive with dead events: mechanical sex, mechanical families; butchery, commerce, even pain, humiliation, tenderness—all mechanical, all driven by the deepest desires in those concerned to avoid contact and support of each other. Patsy O'Day of "Patsy O'Day in the World" is kicked out of the world for violating its impersonality.

These monsters have settled the territory, all right, but where did they come from? One look at some of Bumpus' prairie creatures, and we are reminded of those science fiction movies of the '50s with their H-Bomb mutants reclaiming Los Angeles. The motorcycle people are *Them* returned. Loren with his world-record phallus—he killed a Korean girl with it—is the new Rodan. Bumpus' monsters have arisen from a world of specialists where the identification of parts has become an obsession. Late-model men, they judge their stature in relation to the lower orders. Ernie Seervus listens to Pearl's mother, Athena, say "the Fishes have been important in our history," which he takes to be "a rather aimless observation unless the good lady's hobby was evolution. Then he realized she referred to her family."

I believe that Bumpus' own hobby is evolution, whose most recent stage he sees as an outrageous bestiary. Lewis Thomas, in that fine book, *The Lives of a Cell*, observed that evolution is our "most powerful story, equivalent in its way to a universal myth." The beasts of our imaginations—the Griffin, Phoenix, Centaur (and Rodan)—are impossible, says Thomas, "because they violate evolution." Bumpus' characters represent such violations, but they also are masters of the Earth. Wolves, badgers and kangaroos may wish to get rid of them so that evolution might proceed.

Things in Place would probably be stronger as 11 rather than 13 stories; the last two, "Victims" and "In the Mood of Zebras," are not equal to the others. "In the Mood of Zebras" repeats the sense of "The Heart of Lovingkind" but faintly, and so damages the other story. Otherwise this is a first-rate collection by a memorable writer who knows that a talent for describing brutal acts is worth little unless one feels that there is no place for such things in the world, though there they are.

Roger Rosenblatt

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Correspondence

Humphrey Mea Culpa

To the editors:

Our social problems will not be solved by political speeches ("Humphrey Hype," *TNR*, Nov. 8).

If I were advising the former Vice-President (and I am not), I would suggest that he include in each of his orations these five words: "I was wrong about Vietnam."

John Sheldon
Savannah, Ohio

Ideology Quota

To the editors:

Reading "Party Time for Democrats" (*TNR*, Nov. 1), I was surprised and appalled by *TNR*'s superficial characterization of Fred Harris—and by its resort to the kind of stereotyping that one might expect from a tabloid, but not a thoughtful journal of opinion.

The fact is that Fred Harris has taken stands on at least as many domestic—and foreign—issues as every other candidate, and has as comprehensive a platform as Scoop Jackson, except that his stands have often been based on more analysis and perceptiveness than those of his competitors.

I also do not understand the editorial's

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concept of "the most ideological liberals." I always thought that any political position includes ideological assumptions, and I cannot conceive of ideology as a matter of quantity. I wonder who *TNR* thinks is least ideological, and if so: 1) what is good about that and 2) what other qualities that person maximizes instead.

. . . I think Fred Harris above all, has generated serious discussion of issues, as have a couple of other candidates. Perhaps that discussion has not been framed in long position papers, but which candidates, after all, can only carry on in brevity.

Herbert Gans
New York, New York

G.B. Requests

To the editors:

The Shaw Estate has authorized me to compile and publish *The Collected Screenplays of Bernard Shaw*, which will include those screenplays that were not filmed as well as those that were, and will also contain film sequences, scenarios and fragments. I would appreciate hearing from readers who have copies of such writings, letters, or other information that might be useful to me.

Dr. Bernard F. Dukore
University of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

The Classifieds

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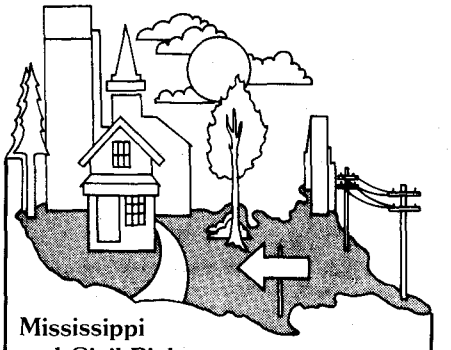

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And yet, for 10 pounds of beauty, grace, and song, the devotees of this endangered warbler have gone to extraordinary lengths to prevent its extinction. Elaborate traps have been specially designed and constructed around its range to catch the cowbird — a parasite which reduces the number of Kirtland's warblers by 78 percent. Forests of young jack pine — its only natural habitat — have been created expressly for it. Areas that have burned accidentally have been reserved for it. And forests of jack pine have even been burned by plan to create new growths of the vital tree.

Despite this extraordinary nurturing, Kirtland's warbler continues to dwindle. This elusive species which winters on a Bahama island, has been reduced in its summer range to eight colonies found only in three counties in Michigan. In the last 13 years, its numbers have shrunk by two-thirds. Only 334 adult birds were counted in the last census. Help is urgently needed.

Kirtland's warbler is only one of 114 species and sub-species of wildlife in the United States now threatened with extinction. Foremost among the private non-profit agencies devoted to the protection of these and all forms of wildlife is the National Audubon Society. It maintains 44 sanctuaries throughout the country to provide safe nesting, feeding and resting sites for birds, and a protected environment for other wildilfe. Jean Dorst, the great European environmental scientist has said, "The National Audubon Society . . . has done more to protect nature than any other private group in the world."

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